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"UP NECK"

IN

1825

BY

GURDON W. RUSSELL, M. D.

HARTFORD
1890

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INTRODUCTORY.

WHEN this sketch was promised to Mr. Burr of the *Hartford Times*, it was expected to consist simply of a map of the road from the present Tunnel to the Windsor Line, with the location and names of the dwellers there in 1825, together with a few pages of manuscript. After it was more seriously considered, it became evident that much more could be said than was at first anticipated, and properly be said too, as being a part of the local history of the town.

A part of it was read at a meeting of the Connecticut Historical Society on the evening of January 11th, and the greater part was published in the *Times* of January 18th and 29th, February 5th and 19th. A few corrections and some additions have been made since then, and a chapter on the North Meadow has been added.

G. W. R.

HARTFORD, May 15, 1890.

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UP NECK IN 1825.

I.

PRELIMINARY.

IT is proposed to give in this paper a list of householders residing on both sides of the road leading to Windsor during the year 1825. There may be some errors, but it is believed to be essentially correct, for I knew most of them at the time, except at the extreme northern section, and have been pretty well acquainted with them since. Valuable assistance has been given by Mr. Henry Keney, Mr. Samuel Mather, Mr. A. E. Burr, Mr. Nathan Starkweather, Miss Margaret Goodwin, and others; and all agree upon this list as now presented.

As far as I know there are not many of these people living, and but few of their direct descendants in this town. It is a striking illustration of the decay or removal of families which will find its example elsewhere. We in Hartford often talk of our old families, as if they were still represented here with us, but not many extend beyond three generations. If we go over the whole town, the number will be found so small that we shall confess our astonishment. A single representative or so may still linger, but most of them are gone. Look at the old public records, or even in the early newspapers, and there will be found unusual or unfamiliar names. It is the same all over the State, and new blood has come in, from other towns or from abroad, to supply their places.

While two-thirds of a century is sure to make great changes, there must be some now living who can give us Hartford as it was in 1825, in other sections; the south end, the west part of the town, Cooper Lane, and Albany Turnpike, should have its historians. It is hoped that some will attempt this, for these reminiscences are always interesting and valuable, as a delineation of our domestic life and manners.

It has often occurred to me, and doubtless to others, that there were more instances of decidedly personal characteristics in former generations, than in our own. The population was smaller than now, and communication with one another was much less. There grew up in the little republics of the Colony or State a race of men who were obliged to think for themselves, and who did think for themselves; and so they became bold, independent characters, odd at times, and obstinate. There were no newspapers, or but few of them, to formulate and establish their opinions as now; they were resolute, and discussed their various matters with great freedom, in the town, in the religious society, in the school district. Most of them could talk with vigor, better than they could write with elegance. If this led to great diversity of opinion, it produced an independence of thought and a positiveness of expression; their oddity was the natural outcome of their surroundings.

In 1825 the city line on the north extended no farther than Belden's Lane; the stone which marked this limit was on the east side of the Windsor road, in front of Belden's store. The road itself was the common highway to the north, and was in the usual condition of most highways at that time, very muddy at certain seasons, and very dusty at others. The tax-payers brought gravel from Blue Hills and endeavored to improve it, with about as much benefit as usually comes when they are allowed to "work out their taxes." Whenever I pass the gravel pit, I never fail to remember the several loads procured

there and dumped just above the Arsenal. Though too young to load the cart, yet I could drive the oxen, and see that it was carried where it was wanted. For this purpose a boy of ten years was as good as a man of thirty.

Although in this sketch, for the printer's convenience, the road is represented as straight, yet this was not absolutely so, for there were several small curves in it, and the trend was to the east. While in general it held to the high ground, yet it did not always do so, for there was a low place opposite the "Pool" lot, which was nearly reached by the spring freshet; and another at the entrance to the Meadow road which was covered by very high water in the spring. This has now been raised, but within thirty years I have been obliged to go over the high ground in the lots on the west.

The first milestone was in front of the old almshouse, nearly opposite the present gate of the North Cemetery; the second one was, and is now standing, just south of the residence of Charles Mather; the third is south of the "creek" which crosses the road near the old Red Tavern, which has lately been pulled down. The line dividing the towns of Hartford and Windsor crosses the road south of the house of Samuel Mather on the west, and turning, runs just north of the old John Marsh house on the east; some say it passes through it. All distances were computed from the State House, the present City Hall, so that the route to be described is a little more than two miles in length. It was pretty thickly settled; most of the houses were old, and a large number have now disappeared. Some were painted white, and some had been painted red, and not a few were perfectly innocent of paint, having acquired that soft brown color which Downing so much admired and did so much to introduce some years ago.

This road was the great road to the north country; there was none other laid out or traveled between this

one and the river on the east. To be sure, there was the road in the meadow, beginning at the foot of Village Street, where it crossed the creek bridge and ran north through the meadows for two miles or more, until it turned directly to the west and came out on the Windsor road, just south of George Wadsworth's. There were no houses on this road, unless it was a small, gambrel-roofed one near the creek bridge, and a very dilapidated and uninhabited one thirty rods or so north of it. This last was used as a barrack or hospital for soldiers in the war of 1812. It stood just above the present ice-houses, near the water, and was a terror to all little boys who came out of the meadow alone, near sun-down, with a load of hay. I can answer for one who whipped up the oxen and drove past as rapidly as possible. The stories which men told about it, that it was filled with devils and all evil spirits, who were crowding at the windows and crawling in the chimneys, were enough to fill a small boy's heart with terror. We had no doubt about the personality of the devil then.

The farmers who owned land in the meadow were obliged to take quite a circuitous route; I know how this was myself, for riding on horseback behind my grandfather, I have been over the ground many times. A small boy could not do much towards farming, but he was useful in riding a horse in plowing out the corn. It was a combination of business with pleasure, especially agreeable to the boy and very acceptable to him in place of harder work upon the farm, or harder work still in going to school. A few farmers, whose land extended from the Windsor road into the meadow, may have had a private passageway through the swamp, and I think Captain Cook had one, which could be used in dry weather; but generally there was a long swale, mostly covered with wood, and quite wet, called the "Swamp," which prevented much crossing.

George Cook, the third of that name, tells me that

there are occasionally found in plowing a number of large stones, of from eight to twelve inches square at the top, which are set in a direct line through the meadow toward Windsor, which are larger than the common merestone used to mark the division of the lands; and these may indicate the layout of the road used by the first settlers for a few years, and before the present road to Windsor was opened. If this line is prolonged it leads into the present course of the river, which is annually wearing away the western bank, which formerly was far out in the stream.

The first settlers very naturally took this way to their brethren in the north. In all probability it was not much wooded; a great open space must have been here, as level as a western prairie, extending far up the bank of the river, and as far as the swamp on the west, which was thickly covered with wood, as it was sixty years ago. The river bank may have been fringed with willows as at present, together with the river poplar,* and in some places must have been found the white maple and our common elm. Some large specimens of the former were standing not many years since, ancient and beautiful, especially when branching near the ground, and the light under-surface of the leaf was turned upward by the fresh summer breezes which flowed up the valley. But the injury which came to them from the ice, upon the breaking up of the river in the spring, caused a decay of their trunks upon their northern side, and they became almost hollow, or were rendered wholly so by fires kindled within them. A few may still be found, mere shells of their former grandeur.

From the swamp on the west of this tract, the wilderness must have extended an unknown distance into the country. It was no easy matter to open a road through it; it was not only difficult, but the time could not then

* *Populus Canadensis*, Michaux: supposed by him to be identical with the Cottonwood of the Western States.

be spared from work absolutely necessary for subsistence, and so, as do the immigrants into any new country, they took the way which was most easy, and which kind nature had provided for them. These meadow lands were used to some extent by the Indians in raising corn, and were well suited to their imperfect means of cultivation. It is not known whether they were burned over by them, to keep down trees and shrubs, but naturally I think, there was from the peculiar location, a tendency to an open space, which seems to be common to many rivers flowing through a level country, and annually covering their banks. The way was thus open to our fathers, and they gladly seized upon it. Afterwards, when they found that they were much incommoded by the high water for a part of the year, they naturally looked for relief by turning to the high ground farther west, about which something will be said by-and-by.

On the west side of the Windsor road there was Belden's Lane, with no dwelling upon it, now called Belden Street; it was the original road to the west country, and I know nothing of its layout or history. There was a pent road on the south line of the cemetery, extending west as far as the land of Gurdon Wadsworth, and only called, as I remember, "Nigger Lane," because there were a few houses upon it occupied by negroes. It is now more pretentious as Pine Street, and is also wider than formerly. I don't remember that it was ever called "Negro Lane," or that it was ever said that "negroes" lived there; the word was not current in that region, and would have caused a look of astonishment if it had been used; a negro was an unknown being; a "nigger" was well known. It may reconcile us somewhat to the position and feelings of our southern brethren, who know him only by the latter term, when we remember that we have held them as slaves, bought and sold them, and regarded them as an inferior race, not so very many years ago. I have found bills of sale of them in the papers of my great-

grandfather, Samuel Wadsworth, and advertisements offering them for sale, or rewards for their apprehension, may be found in the public prints of that time. I have heard it said by the women, and am afraid it was not in a spirit of humiliation, but rather of boasting, that such and such an one of their ancestors had such and such a number of slaves. They seem never to have had separate or distinct quarters, but lived in the house with their masters, and slept, "why, yes, slept on the kitchen floor, or anywhere a place could be found." We need not blame our southern friends too severely, but with them thank our God that we are delivered from this most anomalous condition in a nation of freemen, so repugnant to all our ideas of liberty and to the very first sentence in our Declaration of Independence. It may be said that with a great price obtained they this freedom, and their descendants may reply that now they are free-born.

When Hezekiah Bull sold to the town of Hartford, January 22, 1807, his lot of eleven acres, three roods, seven rods, more or less, for the purposes of a Cemetery, it was described in the deed as being bounded as follows: "East on highway leading from Hartford to Windsor; north on Ephraim Robbins's land; west on Gurdon Wadsworth's land; south on a pent road lying between said piece of land and Archibald Greenfield's land — and all my right and title to said pent road which he received from Samuel Goodwin, James Goodwin, George Goodwin, and others." This deed is dated 17th July, 1795. The pent road was originally laid out in 1705, as is shown by an agreement between Samuel Goodwin, John Skinner, and Daniel Lord, of May 22d of that year: "Know all men, etc., that whereas we, Samuel Goodwin, John Skinner, and Daniel Lord, having purchased several parcells of land of Mr. Cyprian Nicholls, jun., of Hartford . . . finding it necessary for the improvement of our sd parcells of land that there be an open highway laid out by us upon the highway leading from Hartford to Windsor through the

southernmost bounds of sd parcells of land belonging to the sd Samuel Goodwin and John Skinner unto the beginning of the sd Daniel Clark's land . . do mutually agree . . to leave out one rod and a half wide of sd land on the southernmost bounds of our respective parcells of land."

This was the origin of "Nigger lane," which was only a narrow lane in my boyhood, but was afterwards widened, taking for that purpose, I fear, a piece of the cemetery; and has been extended west to the present Vine Street.

At the western end of this lane, but a little to the south of it, was a brick building, without windows, painted white, or whitewashed, which was used as a powder-house in the war of 1812. This lane was the only means of access to land belonging to G. W. The large lot of eleven acres was used by him as a pasture and was quite familiar to me; a smaller one was an apple orchard, with some good fruit; boy-like I knew where the best trees stood, and could find the "early apple," as we called it, even if it was night. Perhaps you knew of this tree yourself, Mr. A. E. B., for you resided on the Albany turnpike within a stone's throw or so of it, and doubtless, like most boys, had a proper sense of localities.

This lot of Hezekiah Bull became the Hartford Cemetery, and the present lines are now essentially the same as when first opened, excepting upon the north, where one or more additions have been made. The first interment was that of Mrs. Anne Olcott in 1807, and is found in the first road leading to the north, after entering the cemetery. The inscription is as follows:

In memory of
MRS. ANNE OLCOTT,
consort of
Mr. Jonathan Olcott,
who died Feb. 6th,
A.D. 1807,
aged 71 years.
The first person buried
in this yard.

The stone is about four feet by two, of brown sandstone, and is somewhat worn by exposure. An urn, slightly cut in the stone, with a willow drooping over it, ornaments the top, and there is a border on the two sides.

The only other opening to the west, even as far north as the town line, was through the present Westland Street, formerly called the road to the Blue Hills, but also as Miss Margaret Goodwin says, "Abbe's lane." "Love Lane" came in some time afterwards. I think there was another name, but cannot remember it. It wound around south of the present almshouse, over the hill into the Blue Hills district. It was lined with woods on both sides for a considerable distance. When driving cows from the pasture after sundown, it was passed over as rapidly as possible. The possible danger of injury to the cows was not considered as of much importance as the probable danger to me by delay. If there were no Indians in the woods, we still remembered the stories told about them; and then the "painters" were expected to jump out upon us from every clump of bushes.

II.

WHY THE NECK.

WHY this region which I am endeavoring to describe as it was in 1825, was called "Up Neck," is a very interesting matter of inquiry. If we speak of lands "in the Neck," instead of "up Neck," we shall use the precise words which are found in the early records and deeds of the town. Lying in the north part of it, the word "*up*," instead of "*in*," came into use as commonly applied to localities north of us.

The term "in the Neck" was early used by the town, as is shown by the following:

"March 24, 1640.

"It is ordered y^t^ if anie cowes or horse or other catell be found in the necke or in the meadow after the 8th of Aprill they shall be liable to be pounded," etc.

"13th September, 1640, the north sid of the river * being met,

"It is ordered y^t^ if any person bring out any hoges or piges y^t^ are above a month ould out of the meadow or necke the owners of these hoges or piges," etc.

"6th May, 1641.

"It is ordered that if any person bringe out any hoggs or piggs that are above a month oulde out of the longe meadow or necke of land adjoyning to it or out of the little meadow or out of the south meadow," etc.

"At a Side meeting of the north side of the Towne Feb. 27, 1655. Ordered by voat that what catle shall be found in the necke or meadow with a keeper or without except upon a mans owne land shal be liable to pounding and shall pay ther pt for all commoning charges of the keeper."

——— "one parcell which he received of Mr. Thomas Olcott lying in the neck of land contayning by estimation three acres be it more or

* That is, our Little, or Park river.

less abutting on land now Barth: Barnards on the north on Thomas Burnams south on the north meadow lotts east on the common fence or Cowe pasture West." — *June 28, 1671.*

Mr. Starkweather informs me that in June, 1653, John Allen received a "parcel of land of two acres more or less, abutting upon the highway leading into the Neck on the east"; and about the same time he received seventeen acres "lying in the neck of land," and in 1661 he received from Mr. Kelsey another portion "lying in the neck of land containing two acres more or less." Probably many deeds of a later date may be discovered in which this designation is used. It was a part of the town well recognized, and "Up Neck" was in common use until a late date. Mr. Starkweather has handed me the following minute: "Town records contain numerous deeds, describing land as situated 'in the Neck,' and from a very early period; showing that it was a locality as well known as Rocky Hill, or Podunk, or Hockanum in East Hartford. Gravel Hill school district, incorporated in 1835, is set off from the other district as follows: 'Beginning in the east line of the Hartford and Granby turnpike, in the center of the road that runs from said turnpike to Hartford Neck,' etc.; so it can be seen that the name has found a place in the State legislative records; but I have no idea of its origin."

Mr. Wm. S. Porter, in his "Hartford in 1640," says: "The '*Road to the Neck*,' and to the 'Soldiers' Field' lay on the west side of the North Meadow Creek, and probably extended to Windsor. Another 'Road to the Neck,' on which Matthew Allyn's house lot lay, extended from the bend in Village Street, bearing a little west of north, obliquely to and over the hill, which has been entirely closed within a few years."

"In the '*Divisions of the town*,' he says, "the 'Soldiers' Field,' an appellation given to a tract containing about fifteen acres, lay on the west side of the North Meadow

Creek, about a quarter of a mile north of the N. M. bridge." p. 26.

"*Neck* extended as at present, from the town to Windsor, and from the Meadow Swamp to the hills, and included about 400 acres. Each proprietor in the Neck had two lots, one at the upper, and the other at the lower end, as in the North Meadow lots." p. 27.

"*Road to Windsor*, at first, either passed through the North Meadow, or lay on the bank in the *Neck*, adjacent to the Meadow Swamp. Next, it probably passed up on the east side the Neck to the Soldiers' Field, and then crossed to the west side on the borders of the upland. Afterwards it appears to have run from the northwest angle of Village Street, obliquely to and over the hill, to the west side of the Neck. It was many years before the present road was located."* p. 32. By the "present road" I suppose Mr. Porter means the present road to Windsor. He was a patient investigator, and his "Map of Hartford in 1640" is of great value. Mr. F. H. Parker, who some years since read a valuable paper on the "*Soldiers' Field*," before the Connecticut Historical Society, says that it contained about twenty-eight acres.

Let us go down to the foot of Village Street, near which lay the lot of Matthew Allyn. Standing here, we can picture the direction which the road would naturally take to avoid the freshets which made the first road "through the Meadow" impassable. "Obliquely to and over the hill to the west side of the Neck," would carry it in the direction of the freight depot of the Consolidated railroad; then about the foot of Canton Street; then up a rise of ground, through "Patten's Woods"; and then nearly level to the Windsor road. As I remember the lay of the land many years since, before it was built upon, this was the route which would naturally be taken. It went so far north, because some steep ascents were thereby

*See note on p. 23 for ordering highway to Windsor in 1671.

avoided, and there were no sloughs or wet points to be crossed. It was just such a line as any settler in a new country would take, because it was the most easy and accessible.

I think it came out upon the roadway north, just south of the old Alms House, which was a mile from the present City Hall. The land all along this east side of the street is now covered with buildings, and no accurate judgment can be formed by one unacquainted with it, of its former topography. But I have a very distinct recollection of it, and there are some points which indicate strongly that this temporary road, as it doubtless was, debouched here. The old Alms House was on an elevation, but the ground sloped to the south, into an old worn-out pasture. From the Windsor road, leading off to the southeast, in the direction of Patten's Woods, was still visible the outline of an old road, the object of which I could not understand, as there never seemed to be a sufficient reason for it, in the present sterile condition of the land. When it approached the elevation on which the old Alms House afterwards stood, the indications that it had been formerly worked were very evident, for the side of the hill had been plowed into, and the earth thrown up in the form of a turnpike, with gutters on the side. Every one knows that an old and unused roadway soon becomes overgrown with grass, and when earth has been moved upon an unfertile soil, that this roadway will be covered with finer and greener grasses than can be found upon its borders. It was not alone the outline of an old road that attracted my attention, but the fact that its path was covered with white clover and fine grasses, quite green, and in marked contrast with the brown and stunted ones growing in the pasture. It was evidently an old road which had been worked long ago, but for which there seemed to be now no sufficient reason.

It was not until the account of Mr. Porter was read lately, that I thought this was a part of the road which

he describes as commencing about at Matthew Allyn's lot, and extending obliquely up and over the hill. Premising that it is true, that the first road north ran through the lowland, and that the inconvenience attending it led the settlers to seek higher ground, it is fair to suppose that this was the route taken, and that this western termination of it was a part used for a few years.*

The road to Windsor was at first through the meadow, for at a general court April 5, 1638, there is found the following:

"Whereas there is a desire of o^r neighbors of Hartford that there may be a publique highway for Carte and horse vppon the upland betweene the said Harteford and Windsor as may be convenient, it is therefore thought meete that Henry Wolcott the younger and Mr. Stephen Terr[e] and Willm Westwood and Nathaniel Ward shall consider of a fitting and convenient highway to bee marked and sett out, and bridges made over the swamps, and then itt being confirmed by the Courte, the inhabitants of Harteford may with making a comely and decent stile for foote and fence vpp ye vpper end of the meadow; this to be done by Mun[day] seaven nights vppon penalty of 10^s every default."

This would imply that there was already a road through the meadow, which was to be fenced at its upper end, when the one prayed for on the upland should be opened. This view is confirmed by an order of the General Court of June 11, 1640.

"That the highway betwixt Hartford and Wyndsor, as yt was last sett forth vppon the vpland, shall be made sufficiently passable, by ech Towne what lyeth w^thin their owne bounds, w^thin the space of on month, and there shall be liberty granted to use the highway through the meadowes vntill the said vpland highway be so sufficiently mended, for horse and drifte, as yt shall be aproued of by Mr. Plum, James Boosy, Henry Wolcotte, and Tho: Scotte, and then the highway through the meadowe to cease."

* Possibly another road led from Matthew Allyn's lot to the upland near the present Tunnel, for there was here a depression in the land which has been wholly obliterated by the excavation for the railroad, and by filling in of the highway.

Thus it will be seen that in April, 1638, there was "a desire" for a public highway in the uplands, and that a committee was appointed to consider it, and that in June, 1640, it was ordered to be made "sufficiently passable," and liberty was granted to use the highway through the meadow until that through the upland be "sufficiently mended," when the "highway through the meadow should cease."

In the order of 1638, the upper end of the meadow was to be fenced. This was further directed at a meeting of the townsmen held February 18, 1641, as follows:

"The fence at the farder ende of the north meadow is ordered after this manner as followeth goodman Church is to fence from the great river to the end of that which was John Marshs.

"Next to him William Phillips is to doe four rods.

"Next to him Thomas Scot hath 16 rods.

"Next to him Thomas Halles hath toe rods.

"From Thomas Hals fence to Thomas Lords fence is all William Rescues the which fences meete at the outside of the swampe at the north end of the necke lands.

"These five men in consideration of several persls of ground which they have received from the towne are to set a good sufficient fence and them and ther eighrs forever are bound perpetually so to maintein it for the defence of the north meadow.

"It is also ordered at this meeting of this side the day and year abov mentioned that William Rescue shall hau 30 akers of land lying at the north end of the cow paster next to Winser line in consideration of the fence abov mentioned.

"It is also ordered that Thomas Lord shall hau seven akers added to his firder lot in the cow paster in consideration of his fence in the necke of land."

So the fence was made at the north end of the meadow for the exclusion of cattle, and safety of the crops; this being done, at a town meeting March 9, 1641, an agreement was made between the townsmen and Mathew Marvin, March 9, 1641, concerning a fence and a common gate in the north meadow. He was to have a portion of land in consideration of his maintaining said

gate and fence, "and the towne is to be at the charges of making of one new gate after this ould one is broke, and if any cartor or others shall either brake the gate or pule down any of the posts, the same parties are to make it good; also if any children shall be taken swinging upon the gate by the said Mathew Merrill* he shall complayn to ther parents or masters, and if they do not restraine them the second time it shall be lawful for him to them, and if they brake the gate ther parents or masters shall make it good."

Any one who remembers the great pleasure and comfort which he enjoyed when a child, when swinging upon a gate, must feel that our forefathers were rather hard upon the children in forbidding them this luxury. Their amusements were small enough then, and to curtail them further seems cruel to us now, even if they did occasionally "brake the gate." But the men of that time had serious business in hand; the land was to be cleared, and the means of subsistence obtained; the children must do their part in this essential labor, and it was a waste of time to spend it in swinging upon a gate.

These roads to the north, through the Meadow and upon the upland, were important matters and not easily adjusted; evidently they were subjects of considerable discussion. At a Court of Election, held April 10, 1645, it was considered again.

"Whereas there hath bine much dispute about the highwaye betweene Wyndsor and Hartford, wch hath bine lately vsed in coming through the meadowe of Hartford wth carts & horses, to the annoyance and p^{r}iudice of the Inhabitants of Hartford that haue lotts in the said meadowe. It is therefore thought meete and so Ordered, that the high waye, as for carts, catle, and horses, be stopped vppe, and that the highwaye betweene the said Wyndsor and Hartford in the vpland be well and passably amended & mayntayned for a continuance, by Hartford as much as belongs to them and by Wyndsor as much as belongs to them; the said highwaye to be amended by ech p^{r}ty by six weeks or two months, vppon the penulty of twenty shillings p^{r}

*Marvin and Merrill are one and the same person.

weeke for that p^rty that fayles ether in the whole or in p^rte, as long as it soe lyes not sufficiently repaired and mayntayned; and at the six weeks end or two months end, Mr. Webster and Nat. Waird doe seriously surueye that p^rte wch belongs to Wyndsor, and that Henry Woolcott the elder and Jo: Porter doe surueye that p^rte wch belongs to Hartford, and certifie of the sufficiency of the said highwaye, to the next p^rticuler Court, who are delinquents, and the penulty to be leuyed vppon the delinquent p^rty w^thout any fauor affection, both for fayling att the tyme aforesaid, as also for future the like penulty vppon the p^rsentment of the insufficient mayntayneing thereof." *

The fact that this highway was to be "passably amended," indicates that it was not very passable then, and that the chief travel had been through the meadow. While it may have been ordered, it is quite evident that it had not been much worked, and it probably was only such a "wood path" as may be found at the present time in the Ten Mile woods, or in any of the woods near the city.

This highway now came into more common use, and doubtless was fenced on both sides; for there are deeds of land lying in the meadow which are described as bounded "on the common fence west." But that it was not satisfactory is shown by the proceedings at a meeting held June 2, 1671, when "The Towne chose Capt. Tallcott and Mr. Allyn and Mr. Wadsworth and Daniel Prat and Bartholomew Barnard as a comitty for the North Side of the river to stake oute the highwaye on that side of the river as they shall think most meete to be cleered fr sheep pasture," &c.

The next year this committee reported as follows:

"Wee the underwritten doe order that the highway which shall lead to Windsor shall run by the common fence & bee seven rodd wide and so continue the same breedth tils it come to Windsor bounds. This agreed upon p us June 22, 1672.

"JOHN TALCOTT,
"JOHN ALLYN,
"WILL WADSWORTH,
"BARTHO: BARNARD,
"DANIELL PRATT."

* Col. Records, Vol. 1, p. 125.

This highway has been so encroached upon, and narrowed by various efforts to straighten it, that it is now much less in width. It however is pretty well preserved above Westland Street and to the Windsor line. A recent measurement between the fences at Thomas Gates' gave one hundred and ten feet; another in front of Timothy Mather's was ninety-two feet, and this is now a fair average width. But the end was not yet, and more legislation was necessary, so at

"A Towne Meeting in Hartford Aprill 16, 1679. It appearing to the towne that the highway layd out to Windsor by the common fence as it hath been layd out by the committee especially from the towne so far as the ditch* above Obadyah Spencer's now dwelling house is very inconvenient and will be very chargeable to mayntayne by reason of swamps, pulcks† and hoales that lye in the sd highway — which being now considered by the towne have nominated and appoynted Major John Talcott, Mr. James Steele, Mr. Richards, and Capt. Allyn, or any 3 of them to view the sayd highway and to take off so much of those lotts as shall be necessary to make the highway good and passable and to lay it to the highway from the town to the ditch above-mentioned, and to appoynt so much land as they shall judg a meet recompence for what they shall take off to be added to the west lotts of those whose land they shall take off at the east end of their lands out of the common, and what shall be taken off these lotts shall remayn to the common forever."

There is a record of a deed January 3, 1653, of land belonging to John Allyn (by gift from his father, Matthew Allyn), which is described as follows: "One parcell whereon the dwelling house standeth with outhouses, gardens, yards, and orchards therein being, contayn by estimation twelve acres, (more or less,) abutting upon the highway leading into the neck of land on the west, Nic Clark's land on the south, and Thomas Olcotes land on the north." In Mr. Porter's map of Hart-

* The ditch was not necessarily a wet ditch, for these were frequently of artificial construction, and were intended as marks or boundaries, and not for the purpose of drainage.

† *Pulcks* — a puddle or shallow pool.
Pulk or *Polk* — Norfolkshire. *Wright's* Dict. Archaic Words.

ford in 1640, Nicholas Clark had land on the south of Matthew Allyn, which it appears he still owned in 1653, and the highway which is described as bounding Mr. Allyn on the west, can only be the one which we have mentioned, as "leading up obliquely and over the hill to the west side of the Neck." No other road will satisfy the descriptions and the language of the deeds.

There are several other deeds of land belonging to John Allyn, lying in the Neck, one of them "abutting upon the Great River in the East, and on the Neck of land on the West." One parcel lying in the Cow pasture, bounded "on the little ox pasture on the west, and on the Neck of land on the east." This would indicate that the Neck was considered as land lying east of the present road to Windsor. Another "parcell lying in the neck of land abutting upon the swamp belonging to the North Meadow on the East."

At the General Assembly held in May, 1719, the Court approved of a dividing line between Hartford and Windsor, as "run and measured" "by James Wadsworth, Esq., Mr. John Hooker, and Mr. Elisha Williams on the east side of the 'great river'; and also on the west side said river, to run according to the line of ditches, beginning at a bound stone standing at the place where the red oak tree mentioned in Windsor patent, that stood in Thomas Butler's *land in the Neck*, to Brick Hill swamp, to a walnut stub and ditch by it, then north half a mile to a heap of stones," etc. This shows that the Neck extended to the Windsor line.

I judge from the extracts which have been quoted,—and they might be much extended,—that there were four sections of well designated land extending from the North Meadow bridge and Matthew Allyn's house lot towards and to Windsor. First, the *Meadow*, with the river on the east; second, the *Swamp*, on the west of this, which was at a lower level than the meadow;

third, the *Soldiers' Field*, west of the swamp, extending from a quarter to half a mile from the bridge; and fourth, the *Neck* lying between the Soldiers' Field and the road to Windsor, as far as the Field extended; and between the swamp and the road beyond it.

In showing further that the term "in the Neck" was in early use, I quote from the records of the General Court August 5, 1644. "Forasmuch as there are certain parcells of meadow adjoining to the skirts of ye upland in severall parts of ye neck, which belong to sundry planters in the town, and thatt meadow cannot be improved to the best advantage to the owners without being inclosed, the Neck being now layd for a pasture of cattell, it was ordered," &c.

This enables us to determine, as definitely perhaps as we can, the location of the "Neck." It was a strip of land, from half to a quarter of a mile in breadth, and of pretty clearly ascertained length. Mr. Porter thinks it extended to Windsor, and that it contained four hundred acres.

Let us consider the topography of this strip. It lay west of the swamp, in which the waters of the spring freshets lay for a long time, as they have within our remembrance. Covered with wood and uncultivated, this land was not passable the greater part of the summer, breeding myriads of mosquitoes. Rising gradually from this swamp, we come to the hills, which soon bring us to the Windsor road. This elevated upland is more marked in the southern than the upper portion, though it is evident through the whole tract.

Why was it called the "Neck"? There is nothing in its configuration which would lead us to apply such a term, but it was a designation as common as the meadow, the swamp, the cow-pasture, the soldiers' field, etc.; everyone knew where it lay. It may have been an arbitrary term; it may have been in use, perhaps, in England, applied to similar strips of land, composed

of upland and lowland; it cannot be compared to the neck of land in Boston, nor to a similar one at Saybrook, which are portions of land nearly surrounded by water, with a narrow isthmus. Charles Wesley's hymn describes this,

> "Lo! on a narrow neck of land,
> 'Twixt two unbounded seas I stand."

Whatever water there is here, however, is only on one side of it.

Perhaps if I had turned to Noah Webster, there would have been found a definition of the word which would have been satisfactory and saved me much research and speculation. He thus defines "*Neck*" as "a long, narrow tract of land projecting from the main body, or a narrow tract connecting two narrow tracts; as the *neck* of land between Boston and Roxbury."

"*Neck-land*, a neck, or long tract of land."

This answers to our case: "A long, narrow tract of land"—"neck-land"—then "land in the neck"; then "Up Neck"; and this ought to be and must be a satisfactory response to the question, "Why was this portion of the town ever called 'Up Neck'?"*

The early settlers in New Haven used this same term. In the Colonial Records various lands are described as "lyeing in the Neck." This was between the Quinnipiac and Mill Rivers; the greater part, however, is mentioned as being meadow land, and then there would seem to be land mentioned specifically as being "in the Neck." Dr. Francis Bacon thinks this was on the west side of the meadow, rising gradually into the uplands, and would correspond to the topography of our own "Neck." The location there is well known.

* Mr. Darius S. Skinner, of Putnam, writes to the editor of the *Times*, that he formerly resided for many years in Providence, R. I. In examining deeds of some property belonging to his ancestors, he finds "a part of Providence town, lying between that town and Pawtucket; highlands to the east of Seekonk river were then described as Providence Neck, and those whose residence was farther north, or nearest Pawtucket, were living Up Neck."

"State Street," he says, "in which is the Neck bridge, used to be called, at least the eastern end of it, Neck lane, and it figured by that name in the old maps."

Noah Webster obtained the definition of neck and neck-land right at his own doors.*

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*Extract from the New Haven Colonial Records:

"Jan. 4, 1639, at a General Court, Itt was agreed that every planter shall have a portion of land, &c. * * * and in the neck an acre to every hundred pounds." p. 27, Vol. 1.

April 3, 1640. "Itt is ordered thatt the gates att the end of the neck bridge and the way to it be made convenient forthwith." p. 32.

August 23, 1640. "It is ordered that Mr. James shall have his meadow lott att the lower end of the Neck," &c. p. 43.

"Itt is ordered thatt the causeway to the neck shall be made forthwith." p. 44.

Jan. 10, 1641. "Itt is ordered that after 2 yeares next ensueing be expired, the neck shall be layd for pasture, and thatt all who plant or sow corne therein in the mean time shall secure itt themselves, whether there or elsewhere, everyone are to secure their owne corne, provided yt none doe wilfully or negligently trespasse wth their cattell, and it is further ordered thatt after this yeare none shall plant Indian corne in the neck, butt onely sow itt wth English." p. 48.

March, 1641. "Itt is ordered thatt every quarter thatt would fence their land in the Neck, they may haue liberty so to doe, provided thatt they doe itt att their owne charge, and leave out the springs for the cattle to drink at whensoever any fall wthin the bounds of the neck." p. 52.

III.

THE TOMLIN.

THE old people used to speak of a certain place as being "up in the Tomlin"; and a few yet living know of the locality. As near as can be ascertained, it was the low ground on the east of the Windsor road, just south of, or near to, the second mile stone. Although inquiries have often been made, yet nothing very definite had been learned of its origin. Miss Goodwin remembers it perfectly, and thinks it was so called from a man of that name, or Tombolin, who at one time lived thereabout. It may be so, for the men of early days had a way of contracting or mispronouncing names, which was rather puzzling to one not acquainted with them. Wm. S. Porter, in his list of settlers in Hartford, between 1640 and 1700, gives the name of Thomas Tomlinson, which first appears in the record in 1665, and places his residence "in the Neck," which very likely was in this particular locality, and would thus account for the designation.

Since writing the above, an examination of the town records shows that there was belonging to Thomas Tomlinson, Sept. 8, 1673, "One parcell which he received of Samuel Robinson containing the breadth of Nathaniel Standleys lot lyeing in the neck of land which he sold the said Robbins, and from the common fence to run the whole bredth towards the east full thirteen rod — the land abutts on the common fence West — on Wm. Callseys (Kelsey) land North and on land now Samuel Robbins south and on the East."

Also, "one parcell which he received of Samuel Robbins lyeing in the neck of land it being fower rodds wide and thirteen rodd long abutting on the common fence west and on Stephen Callsey's land on the North, and the sd Robbins same land on the South and East."

Also, March 14, 1675-6, "one parcell of land which he received of Thos. Cadwell lyeing in the neck of land containing by estimation five acres and twenty fower rod be it more or less, abutting on the common fence on the West, and in Wm. Westwoods land on the north, and Bartholomew Barnards land on the South and on the long meadow swamp on the east. He the sayd Thomas Tomlins and his heirs forever engaging to mayntayn the fence on the West end of the sayd land," etc.

In these deeds Robinson appears to have been written indiscriminately Robertson and Robbins; and Tomlinson, Tomlins. The transition to *Tomlin* is very easy and natural.

Miss Goodwin says this has been commonly repeated in the neighborhood:

> "Tombolin and his wife and his wife's mother,
> Were all going over a bridge together;
> The bridge having broken they all fell in,
> 'We are going to the devil,' cried Tombolin."

This was in allusion doubtless to some occurrence in the life of Mr. Tomlin and his family, and makes us anxious to know more about him. Where was the bridge, what was the occasion of his crossing it, and did the unhappy exclamation prove true; did he say this in reference to his family, or knowing himself better than others knew him, did it belong to him alone? He may be excused if in the excitement of the moment he spoke collectively, and said "we," when if he had time for deliberation he would only have referred to himself. It is in striking contrast to the last words of some who attain

much eminence, who, before they are swung off, are very sure they are going directly to heaven.*

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* Dr. Trumbull sends me the following interesting and valuable note:

My Dear Dr. Russell:

It just now occurs to me that, before you put it in more permanent shape, and in full — you may care to have a note on "Tomlin's" or "Tomlinson's" lot, or rather on the rhymes said to have been repeated in his neighborhood, in allusion to him.

"Tombolin" is, I suspect, a modern corruption of the original "Tommy Linn" or, earlier, "Thom of Lyn." "Tombolin" was the subject of one of the best-known sea songs of Charles Dibdin, who was born more than half a century after Thomas Tomlin (or Tomlinson), of Up Neck, died. Fifty years ago there was not a sailor in the British or American navy who didn't know the song,

> "Here, a sheer hulk, lies poor Tom Bowling,
> The darling of our crew!"

But the song from which the verse you quote was taken, is, in some of its forms, at least a hundred years older than Hartford, and "Tommy Linn's" name could be made to stand for Thomas Tomlinson's with less violence than could Tom Bowling's. The shape in which this verse came to me, more than fifty years ago, was as follows:

> "Tommy Linn, his wife, and his wife's mother,
> They all fell into the fire together;
> 'Oh,' said the topmost, 'I've got a hot skin!'
> 'It's hotter below,' says Tommy Linn."

This is the sixth verse of the song of "Tommy Linn," as given in Halliwell's "Popular Rhymes" (1849); but I have heard the variation, as given by Miss Goodwin, in nearly the same words — in my school-boy days. In fact (as Mr. Halliwell remarks) "an immense variety of songs and catches relating to Tommy Linn are known throughout Great Britain," and the air of "Thom of Lyn" was known at least as early as 1549.

Now "Tommy Lin's" self, wife, and mother-in-law, might easily slide into "Tomlin's" or "Tomlinson's," his wife, and wife's mother; but "Tombolin's" or, as a sailor would write (though not pronounce) it, Tom Bowline's, would not only mar the verse, but would transfer the scene from land to sea.

As to the Thomas Tomlins (or Tomlinson) in question, I only know that he was in Hartford in 1655, and died here in 1685, leaving seven daughters, and so far as can be ascertained, no son. Yours sincerely,

J. HAMMOND TRUMBULL.

Since the above was written I have found among Miss Goodwin's papers a survey of land which belonged to her father lying in the Neck, bounded on the west by the highway to Windsor, and running east into the swamp. The survey was evidently made long ago, and is marked "Tomlin Lott," and a portion of it now belongs to Miss G. A section of the lot was re-surveyed by Nathaniel Goodwin, and there is found in one corner of the map this endorsement: "Calculated from this survey, April 30, 1829, by N. Goodwin, and found to contain five acres thirty-nine rods." The land lies south of the residence of Charles Mather, where tradition has always placed it; so that it seems sufficiently established that the name was derived from a former owner, Thomas Tomlinson, or Tomlins.

Mr. H. G. Loomis has called my attention to several other lots in this immediate vicinity, surveyed by Capt. Aaron Cook many years since, and re-surveyed by Nathaniel Goodwin. He thinks that one of them lay west of the Windsor road, and may have extended nearly or quite to the present town farm.

Opposite this locality was the "*Pool lot*," used chiefly for pasturage. Its name came from a spring in a small ravine, which was supposed to possess medicinal qualities. It was visited by many who had faith in its virtues, especially for some diseases of the skin, as the popular idea is that this numerous class are all resolved into two, viz., "itch" and "salt rheum," and as no one is ever willing to acknowledge that he has the itch, there remains only the latter, which is very comprehensive and also very indefinite. It was not disagreeably unpleasant to the taste, being slightly impregnated with sulphuretted hydrogen, and was qualified then and afterwards by some other liquid, which was supposed to increase its hygienic properties. It compared very favorably with the spring or well of Jonathan Hartshorn, on Asylum Street, whose water much resembled it in taste.

IV.

THE EAST SIDE.

LET us consider the occupants of the Neck, beginning at the south, on the east side. The first house was of wood, painted white, owned by Nathaniel Goodwin, and occupied by Judge *John T. Peters.* He was a man of some prominence, a native of Hebron, and a cousin of Governor John S. Peters. The changes in politics about the time of the adoption of the Constitution, brought him to notice, and enabled the Republicans to place one of their number upon the bench. It was commonly reported that he was hard upon criminals brought before him, and that he endeavored to administer justice to them as the law allowed, and as he understood it. Upon one occasion, being asked how long such an one had to serve in prison, he replied, "Let me see, did he come before me? If he did, he was sentenced for as long a time as the law would allow." His barn was fired some years after this, as was supposed, by one who had felt his heavy hand. He was pleasant and kindly affectioned, and by no means as austere as might be supposed from the above incident, but he had very decided ideas about justice and the proper bestowal of deserts. He died in 1834.

His mind began to fail before the limit of his time of service had expired, and he would fall asleep upon the bench. On one occasion, when Mr. Hungerford was arguing a case before him he suddenly awoke, and rubbing his eyes, said: "The learned counsel must instruct the Court on that point." The opportunity was too good to be lost, and so with that peculiar working of the muscles

of his face for which Mr. Hungerford was noted, he replied: "Your Honor is not aware how difficult a task he imposes upon us."

The house is still standing, and was for a long time occupied by D. S. Brooks. There were no pavements then, and the pathway was narrow. South of the house was a large three-thorned locust tree, whose autumnal pods were frequently gathered by the children, and called "tamarinds." South of this, but outside of the foot-path, was another large tree, an elm, which encroached upon it, and caused frequent stumbling from the roots which projected above ground.

A short distance above this was the store-house of *Thomas Belden.* The building is still standing, and has been occupied by several families for many years past.

Next was the shop of *Leonard Kennedy*, where joiners' tools were made, and quite a business was carried on. James Anderson, Melville Copeland, and I think Daniel, his brother, were among the workmen.

Next was the house of *Benjamin Pratt*, farmer, which was some distance back from the street. This had been previously occupied by James Goodwin, a hatter, and a very respected citizen; he was the father of the late James M. and Erastus Goodwin, and removed to East Hartford, where he died.

Then came the rope-walk of *Joseph Sheldon.* This was always a favorite place for boys to congregate, and for men also, and was as convenient as a country store on a rainy day. Hugh Waterman was one of the workmen, and the assistance of the boys was often utilized in turning the big wheel while Hugh was spinning the yarn. It was considered as enjoyable and rather in the nature of play, and not of work; there was a tarry odor about the place which was gratifying. This occupied the present Kennedy Street.

Very near to the rope-walk was the dwelling house of *Leonard Kennedy*, then advanced in life, very quiet in

his manner, a Universalist, amiable, and liked by every one. He was very venerable in his appearance, and so even-tempered that I never knew or heard that he was angry. As money was not very plenty in those days, merchants, mechanics, and others needing it were accustomed to borrow from one another. If a note or bill was to be paid, and the cash was not in hand, then the anxious debtor would start out to borrow from his friends, a few dollars here and a few dollars there, not unfrequently going to a dozen places in a day. As the money was loaned only for a short time, it became necessary to borrow elsewhere, if enough had not been collected, and so the borrowing went on week after week, and year after year; the accommodation was friendly and the debt regarded as so honorable that failure to pay rarely occurred.

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Mr. Kennedy was a borrower; though prudent and economical, yet ready money was not always in hand when needed; accounts ran a long time before being settled. That pernicious system of not paying as you buy, was of common occurrence. "Charge this to me," was the usual saying, and the bill might be paid at the end of the year; the first of January was the general time for settlement, but the period was often prolonged. He was accustomed to say that when he applied to Nathaniel Goodwin he was always pleasantly received, though he never obtained a loan; but he went away feeling better than he did when accommodated by his brother James, for he was always harassing him for payment quickly.

On his way down town he was accustomed to call at several stores to look at the newspaper, and to chat in friendly acquaintance; he was so quiet, even-tempered, and undemonstrative, that he was always kindly welcomed. His old iron-gray horse had so learned his ways that he stopped willingly at every familiar place, and could always be found where he was left; the gentle spirit of the master had thoroughly permeated the beast. Nat Eggleston's

store, and especially that of Samuel Tuttle, were the principal ones visited, and James Burr was a sympathetic companion. Both had arrived at that time of life when the desire for active labor had passed, and when the grasshopper was almost a burden. These places were a common resort for men of leisure, to while away an hour in pleasant chat and harmless gossip. One day they were at Eggleston's talking about matters which had occurred forty years before. A young man who was passing heard one of them say, "And what will there be forty years hence, and where shall we be?" It was spoken with so much of emphasis, and with so solemn a look, that he remembers it to this day. Neither of them, nor any one for many years afterwards, had any conception of the great discoveries of our time. Having endeavored to live a virtuous life, they accepted with the blessed resignation which belongs to old age, the results in the wondrous future.

These little assemblages were probably quite as innocent as our modern clubs, and certainly much less expensive. They interfered little with the sale of goods, for the proprietors attended to their own business, and left the company to take care of themselves. If it was a stormy day, or the sales were not frequent, they might listen to the stories, or tell one themselves; but they were under no obligation to join with the circle, nor was it considered uncivil if they attended strictly to their own affairs. "Well, I will go down to Tuttle's," said James Burr, "they must have the New York papers by this time." Though one was a Federalist and the other a Republican, and both were positive in their views, they allowed no differences of opinion to separate them. The wonderful political revolution of some years previous had resulted in more liberal feelings, and "Toleration," which had been a prominent battle-cry, had produced its legitimate results. There was more enterprise in the town, new buildings were being erected, and business was increasing. The general consensus of opinion was, that there had been too

much of political intolerance, and too much of religious bigotry. It was a long time in dying out with some, however, who are always mindful of the past, and neglectful of the present. "Let me get a clip at him," said General Terry to Alfred Smith and Joseph Trumbull, at a town meeting, a dozen years later, after John M. Niles had spoken; "let me get a clip at him;" and no bloodhound could have been more fierce or confident. Neither of them could restrain the haughty old man, and after he had his say, he turned to them with a triumphant air, as if he had said, "There, I have fixed that fellow." But Mr. Niles would not stay fixed, and though he doubtless fully reciprocated the feelings of Mr. Terry, yet he had none of his impetuous spirit, and a much better command of his temper. And he had also those other qualifications, in a great knowledge of facts and power of logical reasoning, and practical acquaintance with the affairs of life, which are sure in the long run to bring its possessor both confidence and respect. No two men could be in greater contrast than these: the one, elegant in his manners, affable, polite, generous to a fault, autocratic, the representative of a federalism which was nearly dead. The other plain, undemonstrative, awkward, without the polish which comes from intercourse with what is called "good society," possibly with somewhat of the bitterness which comes from continual opposition; but with a thorough acquaintance with the politics of the country, and the principles of our government; a learning which had been acquired by hard study and under unfavorable circumstances, and a sturdy defender of the Democracy now beginning to be felt in the State. He was never what is called a popular speaker, but my father said of him, "He has got a head."

Separated from Leonard Kennedy by a narrow alley only, was the house of *Joseph Sheldon*, the ropemaker. He is well remembered by our citizens, for he was a man of strong personality, and quite as much feared as he was

liked. It is reported of him that he enjoyed calling upon persons with subscription papers, for said he, "I like to see them squirm."* *Moses Burr* had been the previous occupant.

Only a few feet distant lived *John H. Lord*, a descendant of the early settlers. When I knew him he was tall, thin, and in poor health; a mild, inoffensive man, who attended to his own little business and let others alone; which, when rightfully considered, means a great deal. He owned a narrow strip of land, not much wider than his house lot, which extended to the swamp. He had been a trader in Burr Street, I have heard, and was now living in a very prudent way upon a small income, and what could be produced from his land. A small addition of one story had been built upon the south side of his house; the entrance door was opened occasionally, and revealed a miscellaneous collection of articles which would have delighted the heart of a dealer in junk; old account books, scraps of iron, broken tools, and apparently the relics of several generations of Lords. An only daughter married a Mr. Maxon, who was toll-gatherer at the bridge, but who was more fond of hunting than strict attention to business. He removed to Mississippi, where it is understood his talent found full gratification. A son had previously removed to Buffalo.

Living next to Mr. Lord was *Gurdon Wadsworth*, a farmer, and lineal descendant from William Wadsworth, one of the company who came here with Mr. Hooker.

*I am told that on one occasion he was soliciting aid for some object, and made his plea to several persons who were in Mr. Tuttle's store. Major Isham was among them and did not respond, so Mr. S., feeling that this was a case in which he greatly rejoiced, specially addressed him; but the Major, who was irritated, cried out "I won't hear you." "I swear you shall," said Joseph. Now it so happened that the Major was in a corner, surrounded by barrels, boxes, and bags, and could only escape through a narrow passage which was occupied by the stalwart Joseph, who was not to be pushed aside. "I swear you shall," said he to his helpless prisoner, and then he opened upon him all his batteries of sarcasm and imprecation — and they were heavy ones — and for ten minutes probably had more real enjoyment, in his way, and of its kind, than would satisfy most persons for a lifetime. When he had finished, the Major was allowed to depart.

His father, Samuel Wadsworth, resided near the north corner of the present Asylum Street, was a farmer, sea-captain, and for some time also kept a tavern there. I suppose his son resided there after his father's death in 1798, and until he bought the place where he lived at the time of his death in 1826. A few years of my early boyhood were passed there, and are remembered even now with exceeding pleasure. I am not writing an autobiography, but necessarily must say something about myself, for it concerns the life and manners of the people of the time; and many of the incidents and recollections are just such as might have belonged to most of the boys of the neighborhood. Though living so near to the city that the habits of the people were modified considerably by its proximity, yet many of the old habits and feelings still remained. It is hardly possible for the present generation to understand how primitive they were. Not a few of them had traditions which extended backward for many years, when the population of the town was small, and its outskirts were thinly settled. My grandfather was born in 1748; his father Samuel in 1716; his father Jonathan in 1686; and his father Joseph, son of the first settler, in 1648. Now, as Joseph died in 1730, my great-grandfather must have known and talked with him, being then fourteen years of age. So that it was almost as if the very early history of the colony, with its troubles and hardships, its traditions and peculiarities, its remembrances of families, its stories about Indians, always "great Indians, six feet or more in height," its firm belief in ghosts and witches, in signs and superstitions of various kinds, were then presented to us living in Hartford in 1825.

I think our tribe were accustomed to think and act for themselves, as much as those who lived around them, and were probably as incredulous as any of their neighbors. But the belief in the marvelous, and the things unknown but suspected, has come down to us

through hundreds of generations, with a strength too great to be put aside by many, even of our own time. A full share of it fell to me from Rufus Watrous, our hired man. Such stories as he told me about witches, Indians who were cruel, "painters,"* who were ferocious, hobgoblins and "jack o' lanterns," were enough to frighten any little boy, to say nothing of some of larger growth. "And what is a jack o' lantern, Rufus?" "It is a witch with a light, which will hurt you; don't ever follow it Gurdon, it will always get you in trouble." "Did you ever see one, Rufus?" "Yes, once, it came across the road, just above Jerry Graves's, and went down east into the swamp. I watched it." "Why didn't you follow it, Rufus?" "Because it would have led me into the mud and water, and into the river, and I should have been drowned." His perfect faith in other like superstitions was equally strong. Is it a wonder that such early impressions have often lasted until manhood, and even then are recollected with something of fear, if not believed in? Such a dogmatic and strong-minded old man as Dr. Johnson would tread the pavements of London for years and be careful never to step upon the cracks.

The old kitchen was long to be remembered, with its monster fire-place and enormous logs, so large sometimes that they were rolled in with "handspikes"; its old "settle," with its box under the seat filled with odds and ends and curiosities wonderful for the investigation of a boy; its old furniture, which would make some women happy now, and perhaps a few men; and strings of dried pumpkin, and apples, and sausages after hog-killing time. It is a homely picture, but was a home of enjoyment and contentment which many might wish for now. On special occasions, a compound of home-brewed beer, and nutmeg, and sugar, and probably rum from

* Panther or Cougar, *Felis concolor;* at the early settlement of New England not uncommon, but long since disappeared.

the West Indies, was made, and rendered more palatable by the use of a flip iron; if this was not handy, the end of a fire dog was equally efficient, and always ready for use. In the long winter nights, before it was time for me to be put to bed, the settle being drawn before the door to keep off the draught, and the fire burning brightly, I listened wonderingly, seated on grandfather's knee, to story after story, about early times and the Revolution, and bears and wolves, and whatever would occur to him that would interest the infant mind. One was no sooner ended than he was entreated to "tell another," and so it went on, until he became tired, or I was called away.

And I remember, too, when I had grown older, and he, tired and wearied with work, had gone to bed in an adjacent room, and saying his prayers aloud, I had been reproved by an indulgent aunt, for some thoughtless talk, doubtless of a thoughtless boy. And I remember it too with more pleasure now, for he had not always been a decidedly religious man, and had not come to the acknowledgment of divine obligations until old age was near. He was one of the early Methodists of the town, and had been "converted" under Maffit, who was a noted preacher and revivalist of his time, and who was often at the house with presiding elder, circuit riders, and other preachers. There is no reason to suppose but that he continued in the faith, though some expressions might occasionally drop out which indicated earlier habits. But, good man, he meant no harm, and will be judged by the intents of his heart. There were some words which he would use to a lazy boy in his employ, which were not understood by me, but naturally were remembered, which he rattled off when provoked, with a peculiar motion of the arm, and prolonged trill upon the first syllable.

So one day I tried it upon the same subject. He

being near at hand, heard my feeble imitation, and was doubtless self-reproved, and chided me. "What, what is that, Gurdon, you must n't say that." Of course the impropriety was not apparent to me, and I never could imagine what "w-h-u-sbud" stood for, until some years after, when reading Tom Jones and Roderick Random, which my aunt said I ought not to read.

Mr. Maffit was a wonderful man, and possessed quite an influence here at one time. He was an Irishman, of fine appearance, really handsome, very fluent, and by some would be called eloquent; the women liked him. His imagination was lively, quite lively, it may be said; a small fissure in the lip was no disfigurement, but gave his words a slight lisp, which rather added to their impressiveness than detracted from their effect. The sentences came forth with so much rapidity, and with so much ease, that one could not refrain from listening. His exhortations and appeals to the sinner were sharp and direct, arousing the sympathy and enforcing the conviction. His language was beautiful, for the terrors of the law even were clothed with words so delicate and sweet that no one could be prejudiced by their harshness. The gift of oratory he certainly possessed, and used it with a force and delicacy which were in marked contrast with many of his brethren. He was exceedingly tender and pleasant in his intercourse, and swayed the people, for the moment, as no other man did. These opinions are formed more from what I saw and knew of him some years afterward, when the judgment of the young man was better than that of the boy. There lingered in my mind, however, a certain distrust which I would not listen to, and a fear of heartfelt sincerity in his labors which I endeavored to put away. He aroused the attention of all by his actions, by his burning words, and by his beautiful figures drawn from a mind highly imaginative. The thoughts of the prophet Jeremiah might be there, but the words were the words of the Song of Solomon. While he was earnest

in his pleadings, there was a certain apparent calmness about him, which was denied by his utterances, and by all his surroundings. But there remained in the mind a faint suspicion, which was checked as soon as it arose, that all this fervor, and these glowing words, and brilliant sentences, might be mechanical, and the delight of a man who was well pleased with himself. I say "a suspicion" which ought not to have been mentioned at all, because it was only one of a thousand thoughts which will force themselves into the mind of a young man, without reason to form or sound judgment to confirm them. My impression is that he did not sustain the early promise which was made of him.*

The Methodists held their meetings for some time in the old State House, which had been removed to Church Street. They built a meeting-house on the corner of Trumbull and Chapel Streets, in 1820, and moved into it before it was completed. It was of the plainest construction, but was as dear to their hearts as the houses of religious worship were to our first settlers. They were poor in purse, but rich in spiritual devotion. Each one contributed of his little means, and so the building went on, brick by brick, and timber by timber, they rejoicing

*Since writing the above, I have read the following from the History of American Methodism by the Rev. Abel Stevens, LL.D.: "John N. Maffit, an Irishman, joined the itinerancy in 1822, and for some thirty years was one of the most extraordinary and anomalous pulpit orators of the nation. As an elocutionist he may be said to have been perfect in voice, and gesture unrivaled. To the last, his arrival in any city produced a general sensation; and no preacher, not even Summerfield or Bascom, attracted larger multitudes. His style was Osseanic; too extravagant to be real, but sustained by his elocution, seemed natural, and was even fascinating in the desk, and his discourses were always wonderfully effective. He was eccentric, simple, and indiscreet as a child; 'a paradox,' says one of his brethren, 'of goodness, greatness, and weakness.' The Spartan-like severity of the elder ministry was perplexed with wonder and doubt before his singularities, but these good men could not question his usefulness, and they reluctantly tolerated his Hibernian peculiarities, and received through his labors thousands of converts into their societies. He drew them in great penitent crowds to the altars for prayers and religious counsels, and was everywhere successful as a 'revivalist.' A cloud came over his eccentric career at last. Checked in the northern church, he found refuge in the southern, and died in Mobile, mourned by many, impeached by not a few, but the wonder if not the admiration of all." pp. 560–61.

as did the Jews at the rebuilding of their temple. The picture comes before me now as a reality; the two doors on the east end, the pulpit between them on the inside, the floor rising gradually to the west, the long slips, and all the woodwork unpainted, the shavings of the carpenters even as they left them, hanging from the unfinished gallery, the walls unplastered, and the whole house open to the roof, with its rough rafters, its timbers and braces, all exposed to view. This particular stick was pointed out to me as having been given by Strong Mather; that large one, of oak, by my grandfather; and so on over the whole building. They were the joyful contribution of humble and devout men, and we boys took pride in the contributions of our families.

For a time the men were seated on one side and the women on the other. The dress of all was plain; it was a religious duty to put off all gay apparel; the bright colors were discarded and the sombre black or dull gray were worn as only consonant with their Christian profession. Some of the men wore shad-bellied coats, without collars, and many of the women wore bonnets which concealed the face and were like those of Quakers. If they should go into the churches of our day, they would be cut to the heart right speedily.

The noisy demonstrations of a prayer-meeting in the evening, or at the time of a revival, very naturally provoked a disturbance on the outside, of men and boys of the "baser sort"; and the impudent tramping in and out of thoughtless people of both sexes, during service, was an annoyance which often led to attempts to arrest it. On the outside, in front, might be found a howling mob, very like that which is gathered by the Salvation Army. On one of these occasions, it is reported that G. W. went out with the intention of stopping the noise and driving away the crowd. Mr. Maffit, finding that he did not return, followed him, and, seeing the fruitlessness of the attempt, said: "Brother Wadsworth, let us go in and

pray for them." So undemonstrative an action did not suit my grandfather, and he replied: "Brother Maffit, do you go in and pray for them, while I stay here and flog the rascals!" My authority states that he prefaced "rascals" with an emphatic adjective commencing with *d*. As I was not there, it cannot be vouched for by me, but it is possible that an old habit had recurred for this once, under great provocation.

"Where have you been?" said Robert Turner, when his nephew came in rather late one evening.

"To the Methodist meeting, sir," he replied.

"Who did you see there?"

"Gurdon Wadsworth."

"And who else?"

"Asa Rogers."

"I don't believe it," he said, and directed him to go to his bed.

The "Camp meetings" were recruited largely from this neighborhood; their location is not remembered, though the preparation for them, in the way of food and necessary household articles, is quite distinct in my mind. Chauncey Burr's large two-horse wagon was loaded with beds and bed furniture, culinary utensils, and whatever else was necessary for comfort and support for a week or ten days. It was as if families were removing to the Genesee country, or the Western Reserve, and was regarded not merely as a holiday excursion, but as a religious duty; though as near as can be remembered, when the youngsters talked about it some time beforehand, it was associated with "Election," "Fourth of July," and "General training." This latter term brings vividly to mind the great "training" in West Hartford, in 1824. We went, that is, grandfather and myself, in his ox-cart, and though the sham-battle was a terrific sight, yet the way homeward was almost as interesting as any part of that wonderful day. Before sundown the review was over and crowds filled the road, hilarious, shouting, and driving

their horses at full speed. "Get out of the way, old fellow, get out of the way!" they cried, as they came up racing; "give us the road"; but G. W. paid no attention to them, and the oxen plodded on slowly, turning neither to the right nor to the left. So finally they were forced nearly into the gutter, as they dashed by at full speed. The silence and perfect equanimity of that old man showed that he was master of the situation; a light buggy was not likely to gain much if it came in contact with an ox-cart; it was too much of a one-sided affair altogether.

Watches and clocks were not very common; the almanac assured us of the rising and setting of the sun; and the "noonmark," on the sill of the pantry window, was a sufficient guide for the middle of the day. These three factors being given, the other hours could be adjusted with enough of accuracy; there was no need of examining a watch every hour to satisfy a curiosity, or to see if it kept perfect pace with the bell, at noon.

There are certain things which come to mind every little while, which are mentioned, not as personalities, but as pertaining to the domestic manners of the time. Some earned a little money by "sticking" card teeth; this was done mostly by women and children, the strips of leather having been pierced by machinery, and the teeth bent in proper shape, both sent out by Almansor Denslow. Nothing remained except to stick the teeth in the holes, which was quickly and easily done, and then they were ready for any use in carding which might be desired. The long strips of leather and boxes filled with card teeth were to be seen in many houses, and this work was useful in forming habits of industry and cutting off too many hours of idle play. Though never learning this art myself, yet no one need ever be ashamed of any honest labor which is pursued from choice or necessity.

We were well clothed, though not as abundantly as

now; but what boy would wear shoes in moderate weather if left to his own choice. The subject began to be canvassed early in May, and the luxury of "going barefoot" was looked to with pleasant expectancy. Of course upon Sundays, and when we had "company," we were required to be well shod, but ordinarily the shoes were laid aside in warm weather, though with some remonstrances from mothers and aunts. Even when a heavy frost was on the ground we went in the morning to cut pumpkins for the cows, creeping along with half-frozen feet, trying in vain to get a little relief from the cold by treading upon the sides, instead of planting them down squarely. What a ludicrous picture that would make! With these rustic pursuits one gets some new ideas, and some new sensations. With the thermometer below zero, on a January morning, before sunrise, and almost before daylight, one learns, to his surprise, when foddering cattle, how much of cold there is in a solid and well polished fork's-tail.

The culture of flax had not been altogether abandoned; the "brake" was in the barn, and the "hetchel" was in the garret. Pulling it was hard enough upon the back, but the seed was valuable, and the fiber very useful; the little spinning wheels were to be found in most houses, and if the thread was not woven at home, it was still valuable as material for many domestic purposes. Sheep were still raised, I think, for the nicely carded rolls were yet to be seen in our house. There are some events which fix themselves so firmly in the mind that they are never effaced, although received in very early childhood. My mother was spinning with the great wheel; the white rolls of wool lay upon the platform; and as they were spun upon the spindle, she turning the wheel with one hand, and with extended arm and delicate fingers held the roll in the other, stepping backwards and forwards lightly, till it was spun into yarn, it formed a picture to me, sitting upon a low stool, which can never be forgot-

ten. Her movements were every grace, her form was all of beauty to me,

— "who opposite sat, and was watching her dextrous fingers."

The evenings were not all spent in story-telling, or in reading. There were no corn-shelling implements then; what was not threshed out on the barn floor was shelled by hand. That long-handled instrument called "a slice," or "peel," used for removing bread from the oven, was placed upon a half bushel; seated upon it, the ears of corn were drawn upward against the flattened and sharpened end. Soon the measure was filled. A bushel in a bag, evenly divided, was thrown upon the back of a horse and taken to Todd's mill. I waited while it was ground, and was somewhat proud when it was taken home. It was prboably only an example of what was often done, all through the Neck, and is a fair specimen of the primitive customs which had survived till that time.

The large bed of coals in the kitchen fire-place were carefully covered upon going to bed, and usually were preserved until morning. Sometimes, however, they gave out, and then in certain families the children were sent around the neighborhood to "borrow fire." A few coals on a shovel were never grudged, for it was a kindly assistance, which every one might need. Matches were not in use, for I have no recollection of them until some years afterwards, when father removed into the city. The first ever seen by me were from Paris, in long round boxes, covered with red paper. The matches themselves were tipped with red, into which phosphorus entered as a part, and were dipped in a small vial containing an acid, in one end of the box. Before these came into use, and when "borrowing" was not resorted to, we used the tinder-box, and I became quite expert in making the matches, dipping them in sulphur, making the tinder, and supplying the flints. Of a cold morning, in mid-winter, with no fire in the house, and

when the fingers were stiff with cold, this was not always a pleasure, especially when by an unfortunate strike with the flint upon the steel, the edge of the box was hit, and the tinder sent scattering over the hearth. If a boy was ever justified in saying "darn it," that was the time.

Nathaniel Patten owned a little farm just next to us, extending as far north as Miss Patty Goodwin's, and eastward down nearly to the swamp. He was a merchant, dealing in dry goods, and lived in a house about on the site of the Ætna Fire Insurance building; the store was in one part of his house. He often drove up to his farm in a chaise painted yellow, with a large horse, whose head was checked so high that it would now call remonstrances from the Humane Society. In his blue coat, with brass buttons, and with his shirt ruffles, he was a well-appearing man, dazzling to our youthful eyes. Seemingly he enjoyed his "gentlemanly farming," but would occasionally scold us because our hens trespassed into his corn. It was a great astonishment to me then that so slight an affair should cause such a disturbance, and was never fully understood until in after years when I learned how a few hens could demoralize a whole neighborhood. Near the street, between the present house of Thomas Martin and that of F. L. Burr, there was a large pond always filled with water. In winter this was a favorite place for skating. How many nights have I lain in bed and heard the joyful shouts of the boys, "Peel away, peel away, pom, pom, peel away," as they glided over the ice—a terrible aggravation to a boy whose father told him he was too small to be out there at night. In the lower part of Patten's farm there was quite a patch of open wood, which was often visited for nuts. "Patten's Woods" was for many years a noted place for picnics, pleasant exceedingly in the summer days, when the

wind blew up from the south refreshingly, as it does in this valley, near the river. So quiet was this wood, that some years afterward I saw, in the autumn, our wild pigeons among the trees. The ground sloped from them to the south, and on a sunny day in early April it was a famous place for snakes, lured from their winter retreats by the grateful warmth.

Miss *Patty Goodwin* lived in a small brick house, very near where the Arsenal School-house now stands. She was celebrated as a teacher for small children, and so it was very proper that her occupation should be continued in the same place where she had devoted so many years of her useful life. She lived alone, almost solitary, except when her children were there; "the front room" was rarely opened and we knew little of the house, except the kitchen, or living room, where six or eight little tots might be found, sitting upon low benches. The limited housekeeping which went on in school hours did not interfere with our instruction, and the whole was so home-like and comfortable that the usual restraint and necessary order of a common school was not regarded. Here we learned our letters, and abs, and ebs, b-a-k-e-r, etc., and here were learned also the use of the needle, and made patch-work quilts, which were the admiration of our mothers, and were as fairly to be entitled "crazy" as any of the present day. Mrs. Walter Keney remembers the good dame well, and often visited her on Saturday afternoons, and so does Mr. Henry Keney, for all the letters which he learned there, for the teachings which he received in the use of the needle, and especially for the thump upon the head with a large iron thimble on Miss Patty's substantial finger.*

*My sister writes: "So you are thinking up the 'Up Neck' situation of our younger days; hope your memory will take it all in. I have not forgotten my first experience in going to the school which Miss Patty Goodwin kept in her kitchen, in her little brick house; nor with what impatience we listened to hear the old hen cackle, hoping we might be the favored one to go for the egg. And

An open lot, of considerable extent, owned by I. Lord Skinner, lay between this house and the one north. The lot was used as a pasture only, at this time. It contained about twelve acres, and was purchased of John Morgan in 1815. There were several small ponds on it, very small ones, and generally dry in summer. All the surroundings are firmly fixed in my mind, because it was here that I first saw a snake endeavoring to swallow a frog. It was a pitiful sight, and the poor fellow seemed to appeal for help, as he was being very slowly drawn down into the cavern where all captivated frogs go. Whatever remained of him outside of the door showed so much of terror, that he was quickly liberated with a few blows of a stick. The one-story brown house, with a gambrel roof, which was formerly the alms-house of the town, on the north border of this lot, was now occupied by several families. Directly in front of it was the first milestone. This location was about opposite the present entrance to the North Cemetery.

Thomas Marvin built a house just south of the arsenal, a year or two before 1825. He was a shoemaker, and was noted for the swing of his arms as he went down town for supplies.

The *State Arsenal* came next, a very plain building with none of its present famous ornamentation. This was erected in 1814. Thomas Cooley was the armorer.

A narrow lane, which now forms a part of Pavilion Street, led off to the east four or five hundred feet to the fine residence of *Ichabod Lord Skinner*. He was educated as a clergyman, but resigned his charge because he gave an impudent fellow a sound and deserved thrashing, and did not feel that he could face his con-

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with what swelling pride I walked home when the huge old ribbon bow was pinned on my shoulder — mind, it was to be returned the next morning. Neither do I forget that ugly boy, John Knox, who was such a terror to us children. I fancy I can now see our venerable teacher, in cap and specs, performing her household duties diligently and patiently, not over annoyed by us kids."

gregation again. "Lie there, divinity," he said, throwing down his coat, after great provocation, and displayed such "muscular christianity" that his opponent soon cried "enough." He owned quite an extensive tract of land in this neighborhood, was active, enterprising, and earnest in his efforts to develop it. He endeavored to enlist the aid of the town in laying out a new road, starting from the southern end of Village Street, and continuing in a straight line until it came to the road to Windsor, a little below the second milestone, and opposite the Pool lot. As he owned a large part of the land through which the road would pass, he erected fences upon both sides of it, which were pulled down in the night, as was supposed by some parties who were hostile to the proposed venture. This process of erection and destruction was repeated several times, and the project never eventuated in anything practical, save that by it Windsor Street was ultimately opened.* He had expectations that this would be the great avenue to the north, and that the houses on the old road, on the high ground to the west, would be almost deserted. Which expectations were as likely to be realized as were those made when Franklin Avenue was opened,

* This road projected by Mr. Skinner was never completed. I well remember the erection and destruction of fences in the line of this road, which probably so discouraged him that the effort was abandoned. For I find an advertisement in the *American Mercury*, Dec, 21, 1822, giving notice that at a session of the Hartford County Court, November Term, A. D. 1822, "Upon the petition of John Goodwin, Jr., and Return S. Mather, showing that upon the petition of Ichabod Lord Skinner and others, for a highway from the north side of Main Street near the house of Joseph Talcott deceased, running north so as to intersect the Windsor road, said Court at March Term, A. D. 1815, established a part of said highway, praying the Court that said highway may be discontinued, as by petition dated the 31st day of Oct., A. D. 1822. *Ordered*, that this case be continued to the next County Court, to be held at Hartford, in and for the County of Hartford, on the fourth Tuesday of March, A. D. 1823," &c.

The case was brought before the court at the time appointed, "and the parties and sd remonstrants being fully heard with their evidence and exhibits and Counsel, the Court do find the facts and petition stated to be true, and that sd Highway has become unnecessary for public use, whereupon this Court do order and declare that the said road be no longer a public Highway, and that the said Highway be and the same is hereby discontinued."

And so the "New Main Street" from which so much was expected, came to its death.

and was to rival the road to Wethersfield. Mr. Skinner was born in Marlboro. In 1794, he was settled in North Coventry, where he remained almost four years, and until his resignation. He erected a fine house for his residence, and was undoubtedly a man of much energy and talent. After his removal the house was unoccupied for some time, but with the land was purchased by David Watkinson, who also became the owner of much more land in this neighborhood. Mr. Skinner left the city and afterwards lived in Washington, being engaged in various land operations, and died in Brooklyn in 1860. On Sundays his two daughters were driven to the Center Church, with great regularity, in a chaise, by a colored man seated on the bottom, both legs hanging on one side. Henry Pratt, the father of the late Henry Z. Pratt, lived here afterwards, for a few years. When Harvey Hibbard opened the house for billiard players, refreshing drinks, etc., in 1835 or thereabouts, he called it the "Pavilion," which designation has since been retained, and has given the name to the street leading to it. T. L. Wright had a private school here for a time. The Rev. Mr. Bird occupied it for many years as a school for boys, and a most excellent school it was too. The cider mill which was there in 1825 had disappeared long before. It was there that we had our apples ground, and there that the boys made useful a piece of rye straw about a foot or so in length.

In 1811, I. Lord Skinner quit-claimed to the town "a certain piece of land lying in front of my Neck lots, bounded east on said lots, south on heirs of Ashbel Spencer, late of Hartford, deceased, and west on the Windsor road so called, being a piece cut off from said lots by an alteration of the road from that place, and for the purpose of making said alteration, containing three roods and fourteen rods of ground, as by the survey of Aaron Cook made by order of the selectmen."

The road at this time ran farther to the west, near

the house of George Church, curving still farther west to the house of Jeremiah Graves and Henry Grew, and then turning to the east, passed north in the present general direction.

This confirms my impression about the evidences of an ancient roadway, which were observed a little below here, and which, probably entering the early but not much marked road to Windsor, curved gradually towards the northwest, passed along near where the old residences which I have mentioned were afterwards located. It is hardly reasonable to suppose that this old road would turn north abruptly, at a right angle, but would curve gradually in this direction, just as a man passing through some of our forests to the north, would turn hither and thither, avoiding small ponds or ravines, or fallen trees, but still keeping generally to the northerly direction.

In 1825, from the Arsenal north, to the extent of the property of Mr. Skinner, a row of maple trees stood by the street line. These trees were then of considerable size, indicating that they had been planted some years previously, and probably about the year 1811, when Mr. S. gave to the town the deed of land which has been mentioned.

And this particular locality is especially remembered by me, Mr. A. E. B., because there was a settlement between us, of relations which had become somewhat strained. It was a peaceful settlement, for I could not refuse to accept your denial of a reported charge which had been made against you. In its way it was about as important as some of the differences which arise among States. A small "water-wheel" which I had established just back of Harris Olcott's garden, in a small stream of melted ice and snow, had ceased to perform its revolutions, and was gone to parts unknown. You not infrequently, on your way to school, came across lots, in this very direction. How natural it was

to suppose that you were instrumental in its destruction. I do not say that the circumstantial evidence would carry conviction in our courts, for too often convictions do not lie in that direction; lying is rather among the witnesses. But now, after all, please confess if there was not some truth in the charge; a long time has elapsed, and you need not fear a confession; come now, tell the truth, say frankly that you did do it; probably it has troubled you much, lain heavily on your mind, disturbed your sleep o' nights, and made your days miserable; come, now, I'll forgive you. What —no? you will not confess? Why, you have the same expression, the compressed lips, the clenched fists, that you had sixty-five years ago, up in the Neck, in front of Jerry Graves's, near to the maple trees, in the month of March, when a crowd of boys were around and anxious to witness the usual termination of a dispute. You are not half as complaisant as most of the old women, who were charged as being witches by our ancestors, who began by denying positively that they were witches, but being rather pleased as the supposed possessors of wonderful powers, and being also remorselessly worried and teased, finally confessed just what their tormentors desired.

At some distance was the house of *Julius Jones*, which is still standing, a number of rods from the street; his wife is said to have been "a notable midwife."

Nathan Wadsworth, a brother of Gurdon, was the owner of the next house. He had, some years previous to this time, resided at or near the old homestead of his father, Captain Samuel Wadsworth, near the present Catlin corner; my aunt said that the barnyard extended to Main Street. His wife told me that it had been arranged that his brother Gurdon should move them, but that the particular day had not been agreed on. One fine Monday morning he appeared with his ox-

team, ready to load the family goods, and though she protested that they were not ready, and had not thought of moving on that day, yet the sturdy farmer declared that he was there for that purpose, and "that they had got to go," and they went. "Law," said Aunt Sarah, "what could we do!"

Above this was the house of Captain *George Cook*, which held a large and happy family of boys and girls. From father down, and I presume from their grandfather Aaron also, they were famous for hunting and fishing, and interest in all social gatherings and innocent sports. On Thanksgiving Days, when it was customary to shoot at turkeys and chickens in the lane near the old "Slaughter House" lane, which lane I suspect was one of the original "roads to the Neck," the father could be found with his boys with rifles and shot guns, as interested as any of them, commenting in his quiet way, with a little hesitancy amounting almost to stuttering, which was decidedly pleasing. A "fish fry" was not complete unless some of the Cook boys were there, to handle that great frying-pan, large enough to hold a platter of fish. And who should draw the net in "Skinner's Hollow," down in the meadow, unless Jo, or George, or Sam, or some of the long list, were there to manage it? Alas, not one of them remains; but blood will tell, and a George of another generation is present, to show us what good things may come out of the meadow, besides grass and corn. How many years black *Joan* remained in this hospitable family I know not, but long after the period about which this story is being told, she was there, a most faithful servant, always ready to help the children of the school-house when in crowds they poured into the old shed, at their nooning, all clamoring for water at once.

Next to the house of *William Cook* was the Button factory of *Cook & Church*, who were ambitious young men, and in 1812 began the manufacture of gilt buttons of various patterns. When the war ended, they were compelled

to stop, and the building was unoccupied in 1825. Some years afterwards it was moved to the south corner of Kennedy Street, where it is now standing, and has been converted into a dwelling-house. Samuel Church was a brother of Joseph Church, and the father of the late Lorenzo Church, who is well remembered by many of our citizens.

The small brown house next to the factory was occupied by *John Goodwin.* He had two daughters, Esther and Abigail; the former married James Ruggles, a tall and striking fellow, the son of Nathan Ruggles, looking-glass maker and gilder. The father was located in the building now occupied by T. Sisson & Co., and was interested in horticultural matters, having a public greenhouse in the rear of his shop, and Judge Adams tells me he was one of the corporators of a horticultural society. His son James was a different man, and was one of a band of actors who played in the wooden building which stood in the rear of the Hartford Hotel. This place is well remembered, because Rufus Watrous took me there one night, when the admittance was twelve and a half cents, and I stood outside for some time, kicking my heels in the cold, having only six and a quarter cents in my pocket. As the house filled, the heart of the ticket-seller softened, and going in I saw "Jim" Ruggles in regimentals, in all his glory, a very long man, with a very long sword, cutting and slashing in a manner sure to captivate a boy's heart. And I afterwards saw a wagon load of his companions driven off to the jail for violating some ordinance for the public good. The other sister married Joseph Wait, a printer, a very handsome fellow, with black hair, black eyes, and bright cheeks, which attractions captivated too many women. But Abigail was a good woman, for whom I entertained quite a boyish affection, because she was so pleasant, and then for a time she was our "school marm," in the summer months. She lived happily with a daughter in New York, and only died a few weeks since.

Mr. A. E. Burr has very kindly given me his impressions of Mr. Maffit, and of the early Methodist movements, as follows :

"John Newland Maffit, the celebrated revivalist, came to Hartford in the year 1820. There were not many Methodists here then. They had no church edifice, and Mr. Maffit began revival meetings in the hall of the House of Representatives, in the State House, now the City Hall. Meetings were held there Sundays and week days, but in the evenings the meetings were held in the old Carriage factory which was formerly the State House and removed to the south side of Church Street, half-way from Main to Trumbull Streets, in the year 1795. Mr. Maffit was then about 26 years of age. His piercing eyes were black, as was his hair, which he combed straight and close to his head. It was smooth and shiny black. On the right side of his upper lip was a large scar. He was of medium size and height, and was called a handsome man. He was certainly a remarkable man. He was a good elocutionist, had a soft, musical voice, sang sweetly, and as an actor he had no fault. On the stage his success would have been complete. He was magnetic ; in his sermons he at once held his audience in silent and profound attention. He appealed to the sympathies, the fears, and to the personal welfare of his hearers, in an eloquent manner, and frequently there was a vein of true poetry in his sermons. Beginning his sermon in hardly a note above a whisper, he commanded silent attention ; then raising his voice to its rich full volume he poured out anathemas upon Satan and his works ; he held up in vivid colors the torments of hell, and did not hesitate to call it by name and to depict its horrible flames of brimstone heat, where unrepentant sinners were doomed to dwell forever, "without a drop of water to cool their parched tongues." Of the agony of Christ upon the cross and his yearning desire to save sinners, even those who haughtily rejected his overtures, Mr. Maffit spoke in eloquent and pathetic terms. His invec-

tive was severe, and his soft musical tones when expressing sympathy and love for those who were seeking a regeneration, were magnetic, and touched the excited feelings of his hearers, many of whom fell from their seats as if in a swoon. They were 'struck with conviction' he said. Then calling to the altar all who desired prayers for their salvation, he appealed to them in tenderest language, urging them to pray, struggle, 'agonize' for forgiveness — and suddenly lowering his voice he would begin to sing in remarkably sweet notes some appropriate hymns. Then he prayed earnestly. The effect was felt all through the audience, and the converts were many.

"In 1821 the Methodists began the construction of the 'First Methodist Episcopal Church in Hartford,' on Trumbull Street, near Main. In December of that year the walls were up and the roof was on. There was no plaster on the walls, no ceiling to cover the bare rafters. Plain pine board seats were put in. The weather was cold, but there was neither furnace nor stove. Here large audiences crowded in and the revival was great. The large circular altar was filled every evening with applicants for prayers, and Mr. Maffit passed from one to another, whispering an encouraging word. To the women, placing his face close to their bonnets, he would say, 'Pray, sister; don't yield; cling to the Saviour, He will redeem you.' One night, as he was passing out of the door, at the close of the services, a stout man struck a heavy blow upon Mr. Maffit's chest, and said, sullenly, 'Now keep your face from under my wife's bonnet.' The man had no good reason for this assault, but he was not arrested.

"At these revival meetings Mr. Maffit denounced 'pride' as a besetting sin. The fashions of society were condemned, and young ladies with trimmed bonnets were pointed out from the pulpit, and warned that 'those roses and ribbons on your bonnets, and your worldly pride, are carrying you down to hell, young women; repent, cast away your fashionable attire, and be saved.' Most of the

Methodist women, ignoring pride and fashion, wore stiff Quaker drab 'scoop' bonnets, with no trimmings, believing that the pearly gates would readily open to that sign of the true faith, while they would not turn on their hinges in the presence of a velvet bonnet trimmed with bright ribbon, a rose-bud, or the plumage of a beautiful bird.

"Mrs. Maffit did not agree with her husband in his religious views. She was light-hearted, loved fashionable attire, and was not always respectful to her husband. She took pains to adorn and curl her hair and dress in the fashion. Mr. Maffit appealed to her to regard the plain dress and simple manners that he had urged upon his church, and begged of her to please him at least 'half of the time.' The next day she appeared with one side of her head in curls and dressed in fancy style, while the other side (Mr. Maffit's, she said) was brushed down smoothly and in the plainest manner. Mr. Maffit was beaten, and he surrendered 'his side' of his wife's head to the fashion and pride of the day, dangerous as it was. It was proverbial that she loved to torment her husband, and repeatedly she attended services and 'made up faces' at him while he was preaching. There were clouds in the household of the Maffits, where all should have been peaceful and sunny.

"The church was poor then. It was all the leaders could do to get subscriptions enough to erect the walls of their new edifice. Among the subscribers was Mr. Strong Mather, whose dwelling was 'Up Neck,' near to the Windsor line, where one of his sons now resides. Mr. Mather was a man of considerable worldly means, a well-known and respected citizen. At first Mr. Maffit's eloquence, song, and admirable acting had won his good will, and he furnished material, in brick, for building the church. Finally there came a misunderstanding, and Mr. Mather joined the Episcopal Church. He then demanded pay for the material he had furnished. The Rev. Mr.

Spicer, a shrewd man, had become pastor of the church. He claimed that Mr. Mather had subscribed $1,000 in aid of the church edifice. Mather denied this and sued the church. The case came before the Superior Court, and Mr. Spicer offered prayer at the opening of the trial. Mr. Mather at once rose and left the court-room, saying that he could not consent to remain there and hear the man who was trying to plunder him appeal to the Almighty to favor the plunder. But Mr. Mather was beaten in the suit.

"In 1822, Mr. Maffit left Hartford for Boston. It was several years later when he returned and remained a few weeks. His smooth, black hair, was now puffed at the sides, and parted and turned at the forehead in fashionable style. The barber's curling tongs had done their work. But this time he failed to get up a revival, and he preached a farewell denunciatory sermon. He said: 'I have brought you face to face with the Saviour who suffered and died to redeem your souls. I have carried you up to heaven and presented to you the joys of that blissful home in the presence of your Saviour. I have carried you down to hell, where the lurid fires and forked lightning spread over its confines, leap to the skies, and forever burn the sinners who will not repent, but who must receive the awful sentence at the last day, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." I have urged and warned you: as cold stones you sit and listen, but do not come forward for prayers and repentance. I wash my hands of your blood and sins, and leave you to your inevitable fate. Farewell!' And then Mr. Maffit left Hartford never to return, and finally died with a cloud resting upon a character that should have been exceptionally pure; died of a 'broken heart,' it was said, protesting his innocence."

Passing over the low grounds at the present Sanford Street, we come to the house of *John Spencer*, which was pulled down when Elijah Mather built upon the place.

He was a very worthy man, a farmer and cattle dealer, who had been unfortunate in his business, and was somewhat indebted to Captain Aaron Cook. Isaac Toucey, who boarded with Mr. S., and was often seen taking his daily walk Up Neck, in his blue coat with brass buttons, was employed by Mr. Spencer to endeavor to adjust matters with Captain Cook. Interest had been charged upon some loans, which he said were not legal, were usurious in fact. This aroused the anger of the captain, who said he had never been called a "usurer before." How the business was settled I know not, but though this family of Cooks were prudent and thrifty people, there is no reason to think that they took unwarranted or illegal liberties with their neighbors. Captain Aaron was a surveyor, and was the possessor of much real estate, and the charge of Mr. Toucey was probably only one of the many methods pursued by members of his profession who assume to say, or intimate, unpleasant things in court as a lawyer, which they would hardly attempt as gentlemen out of it.

Though Captain Aaron was fond of field sports, yet they were not allowed to interfere with business. His son George came in one day and asked his father if any gentlemen had called there inquiring for him, and was answered "No." It seems that an appointment had been made for a hunt with Mr. Elmer, who was to bring his hounds, and George was disappointed that the engagement had not been kept. Some time afterwards, finding that the hunters had called for him but were told that George was not at home, he approached his father, to obtain an explanation. "Why," said Captain Aaron, "you asked if any gentlemen had called for you; no one called but Elmer with his hounds; do you call that fellow a gentleman? I call him Hound Elmer;" and so the son was allowed to reconcile the statements as well as he could.

It was some distance to the next house, occupied by *Allyn Goodwin*, a silver-plater and manufacturer of silver spoons. A small shop, directly south of him, was also oc-

cupied by a *Mr. Wadsworth*, from New York, where cloth-covered buttons were made at one time for Wyllis King, who afterwards removed to St. Louis. The unoccupied land, from Spencer's to Goodwin's, was farming land, belonging to different persons. It was here that the projected road of I. Lord Skinner, called New Main Street, entered the Windsor road; and here was the Tomlin lot; and just north of it was the second mile-stone, a few rods south of the residence of Charles Mather.

There was, in the upper part of the Neck, a region called "Middlesex"; the bounds were not very well defined, but may be considered as extending from the second mile-stone to Strong Mather's. There was quite a little settlement here, and if a stranger asked where William Wadsworth lived, or Moses Goodwin, the answer was, "up in Middlesex." A neighborly, good-natured race lived there, who were kindly affectioned to one another, and who enjoyed themselves, in their way, quite as well as those who resided farther south in the city; and the character of the region was not injured, nor its genial spirit impaired, when Joseph Pratt some years afterwards moved into the house formerly occupied by William Wadsworth. Miss Margaret Goodwin has told me of many incidents pertaining to good fellowship in this neighborhood. The peculiarities of each one were well understood, and sometimes repeated in personal "hits," as follows:

> "*Green* drinks sling clean,
> *Goodwin* winks his eye,
> In comes *Clapp*, and hits him a slap,
> *Dickinson* is always dry."

Goodwin had a habit of winking his eyes when talking; the allusion to *Clapp* was to some occurrence in which he was engaged; and *Green* and *Dickinson* were remembered for some peculiarities which were personal to them. Moses Goodwin kept many swarms of bees, and made much metheglin from the honey. It was so well known,

and so meritorious, that many citizens paid him frequent visits. I refrain from mentioning the names which have been given me, of gentlemen from the city who drove up of a fine morning, to take a raw egg with their metheglin, before breakfast.

We have now arrived at the buttonball trees which seemed then to be almost as large as they are now. Here *Moses Goodwin* resided; the house was painted red, and was a fair specimen of many of the country houses of the olden time, with its huge chimney in the middle, its "lean-to," and the roof running from the ridge nearly to the ground on the east. The low ceiling in these houses was very general, and was hardly seven feet from the floor. Some were seen by members of the Historical Society, in their late excursion to Deerfield, built by the earliest settlers, which were less than this, which would brush the hair of some of our tallest men in town if they entered them without stooping. It was probably the design of the builders to easily warm the house, and no great harm was done, as the huge fire-place kept the room well ventilated. Mr. Starkweather says that it is reported this house was built in 1709, and it is still in good preservation, with its new clapboards, and its new coat of paint, and its cosy well-kept rooms; it is a very neat and comfortable place indeed. Miss Margaret Goodwin lived here, having inherited it from her father, Moses Goodwin, and it is one of the few instances in which house and land have remained in one family for many generations. From her I obtained much information; though she was 86 years of age, yet her memory was remarkably good, so that she could recall events, names, and dates, with a readiness not usually found in aged people. She was erect as a young lady in her teens, patient and cheerful, though she had lost her sight, intelligent, and ready to converse about the times of old, which seemed to her, as is most natural, better than those of the new. And as she spoke pleasingly of the men and women of the past,

of the kindly, hospitable, and enjoyable manner in which they lived, it was easy to realize that with less of rush and show and glitter, there was still a great degree of comfort enjoyed by our ancestors. If she expressed regrets at the loss of her sight, it was that she was unable to read, to see the blue skies, and the beautiful flowers in her garden. Since these sketches were written she has passed away, gently and peacefully, so that it was almost impossible to tell when she had gone. Though my acquaintance with her was limited, it still remains as a comfortable example of how a Christian need not fear to die, and how happy one may be if he realizes that "contentment is great gain."

Next to this was the house of *William Goodwin*, now occupied by Thomas Gates. Then followed *Abner Wadsworth*; and next to him, on the corner of the road leading into the meadow, *William Wadsworth*. There was in this vicinity a small house occupied by *Thankful Cook*, "a midwife, the best in those days."

George Wadsworth, a brother of Gurdon and Nathan, a distant relative of his neighbors of the same name, lived at the north corner of the meadow road. Benjamin Allyn, the father of the late Richard J., married one of the daughters, and Russell Wildman another; the only son, George, died in Baltimore and was never married. It is with this family of Wadsworths, as with many others, that there is not now living a single direct descendant in our male line, through Samuel Wadsworth, though through the female branches quite a family might be gathered together.

North of him lived *Return Strong Mather*, always called Strong Mather, a man of very marked character, and the father of a large family, some of whom still survive. He was an extensive farmer, and was in better pecuniary circumstances than some of his neighbors. It might not be proper to say that he was obstinate, or self-opinionated,

but every one knew that when he had a matter fairly settled in his mind, there was no possibility of moving him from it; and perhaps the same might be said of him, when he, in the opinion of others of course, had not fairly considered it. For, men of this mental formation are so often the victims of their own prejudices, or suspicions, that they come to conclusions without much thought of justice or propriety. He was a Methodist, and contributed liberally to the building of the church in Trumbull Street. Whether he thought his aid gave him a claim to more consideration, or what is more probable, that his opinions were not universally regarded, is not known; but he became so offended that he left his brethren, and connected himself with Christ Church. He was not the first man who, finding that he could not "run" a religious society, has gratified himself by running away from it.

The strifes and contentions about slight differences in opini on which characterized the religious body from early colonial times, and were continued through many generations, have not ceased in our day, and will not cease in the future, until men have more tolerance for the opinions of others, and insist less upon matters not vital to Christianity. When the hearts of men are thoroughly imbued with the precepts of our Saviour, there will be found that "unity" for which they have so long prayed.

But his children, whom I have known for many years, and with some of whom I attended school, in the old school-house yet to be described, have been most worthy and patient people, whose acquaintance and friendship it has been a pleasure to enjoy.

Thomas Wadsworth lived in the next house north; and perhaps *Asa Rogers* lived here also, or somewhere in the neighborhood. He was a farmer, a Methodist, and the father of William, Asa, Jr., and Simeon, all Methodists, and all silver platers. The singing of Asa, Jr., with his head thrown far backwards, his whole soul being engaged

in it, was a sight to be remembered, and a song to be heard.

The large house still standing next to this was owned by *John Marsh*, a substantial citizen, who died at an advanced age not many years ago. The line between the towns of Hartford and Windsor passes near or through this house, but I have never known that any of this family have ever found it convenient to take sudden advantage of it. He was quiet and gentle, much attached to old manners and customs, fond of his home, his land, and all that he possessed. He was noted for the excellent care which he gave to his animals, so that if any were offered for sale they were sure to be the fattest, the sleekest, and the best in the market. When he brought a fine yoke of cattle down town, the admiration of all who saw them, and was asked upon what they had been fed, he would reply in his quiet way, "O, nothing." When the railroad to Springfield was being surveyed he was much disturbed because it was proposed to pass through his land. Like our Southern brethren, he wished "to be let alone." He had lived for so many years in the home of his ancestors without change, that he could not be reconciled to the rushing of railroad trains through his lots. As no agreement could be come to, the land was taken by appraisal, and the money tendered to him in payment. But he refused to take it, and it lay for a few years in the Exchange Bank to his credit. Finally, being urged by a friend to withdraw it, who told him that he could still entertain as much spite as ever against the railroad, and after deliberation, he consented and took it.

The last house in Hartford on the east side of the road, and which appears to stand off in the meadow, was occupied by *Hezekiah Marsh.*

V.

THE WEST SIDE.

LET us return to the south, and pass up the west side of the road. But first let us consider the topography of the land about the Tunnel, which is quite different from that of many years ago. A culvert crossed the road just south of or near McRonald's greenhouses, and the water flowed southwest through Samuel Marsh's lot, and across the Albany road, into Norman Butler's large pasture, and then into Little River. The culvert was from four to five feet below the present road-bed; this depression extended east, in the direction of the railroad tracks, but the flowage of water was wholly to the southwest.

If we look south we see that the large and ancient house lately occupied by Nathaniel Goodwin, stands upon an elevation of at least ten feet above the road, which anciently curved to the south, and the house was then at right angles to it. This was before the Albany Turnpik was opened, and standing as far down as Trumbull Street we can see what a curve would be made if the line was carried up so far as to meet the west line of the highway to Windsor. The Goodwin house was originally entered by but a few steps, and the ground sloped gradually to the east on the Ely lot, and to the north also, where the culvert was built. The southeast corner of the Normand Butler lot was much lower than the highway, within my remembrance, and the lot was protected by a common post and rail fence. If we look at the three-story wooden house formerly occupied by Wm. Ely, we can judge how much

the street has been lowered there; and this is shown also by the old Daniel Moore and the old Keney house. The ground gradually rose on the north after passing the culvert. Thus we find that the surface line was originally quite different from the present one, and that the Goodwin house was on quite an elevation, which sloped gradually to the east and north, as it did to the west also, across the present Ann and High Street and school-house lot into the pasture.

The store of E. & R. Terry stood at the corner of Windsor and Albany roads.* It was of two stories, built of wood, and surrounded by a number of storehouses so that a large stock of goods was always kept on hand, to supply their very extensive trade. That it was extensive will be recognized when we state that their customers came from as far north as Greenfield, Brattleboro, and even Bellows Falls. There was quite a transportation then in scows or flat-bottom boats up the river. When the water was low their cargoes were unloaded and carried in carts or wagons around Enfield Falls, Bellows Falls, and Wilson's Falls. This was tedious and costly, and led to improvements in after years. There was a large trade also with the northern part of Litchfield County, and the lower part of Berkshire County. Few of our citizens can now realize the great number of country teams which were pouring into town through the Albany road, from early morning until afternoon. At that time they had disposed of their produce, and, loaded with plaster, salt, and groceries of all kinds, were wending their way homeward. Much of this business was done in the winter, when there was snow on the ground. It is said that there was a tavern for every mile between the city and New Hartford; so calculating their time judiciously, they would stop at

* In a survey made by Aaron Cook, County Surveyor, in the interest of the Hartford Bridge Company, October, 1814, this is called Church's Corner. I am indebted to Mr. Thomas Martin for an examination of this map.

one of these over night both in coming and going, because they were less expensive than those of the city.*

Eliphalet and Roderick Terry were brothers, and came from Enfield about the beginning of the century. The latter was the younger, and for a time acted as clerk, but soon was taken into partnership, and the firm of E. & R. Terry, which lasted many years, was well known all over this part of the country.

They were both of them sharp and enterprising men, well fitted for their business; but they did not have all the trade to themselves, for though being at the head of the line, thus having the advantage of position, they had active competitors farther down the street. The thrifty and prudent countryman liked to run the gauntlet, and inquire the prices, before selling. The Terrys dealt in plaster, salt, sugar, molasses, codfish, tea, coffee, spices, rum, gin, brandy, and all that lot of miscellaneous articles, which were needed for the country store, or for the family. The use of alcoholic stimulants, while not greater than at present, was much greater among a certain class,

* The following list of taverns between Hartford and New Hartford is given me by Mr. Keney:

1. Joseph Pratt, just north of Asylum Street.
2. Joseph Pratt, Jr., afterwards kept by Daniel St. John.
3. Daniel M. Cooley, opposite Goodrich's drug store.
4. Samuel Moore.
5. James Goodwin, just west of Gully Brook.
6. Lemuel Howlett, corner Albany and Blue Hills roads.
7. Elisha Wadsworth, corner Albany road and Prospect Hill.
8. Barney Collins, West Hartford Four Corners.
9. Aaron Goodman, West Hartford Four Corners.
10. Major Whiting, West Hartford Four Corners.
11. Erastus Phelps, at toll-gate.
12. Major Marshall, foot of the mountain.
13. Francis Woodford, Avon.
14. Obed Higley, opposite Woodford's.
15. Hosford, Canton.
16. —— ——
17. Zenos Dyer, Canton.
18. Thomas Bidwell, Canton.
19. Samuel Merrills, near Satan's Kingdom.
20. Wilcox, Pine Meadow.
21. General Cowles, of New Hartford, a very noted place, where passengers for Albany took breakfast, having left Hartford at 2 o'clock in the morning.

who thought it was necessary to keep their generous stores for the sake of hospitality and good fellowship. It was thought especially necessary to lay in a supply "to go through haying," for what farmer would venture to send his men into the field without furnishing regular rations of rum or gin? Rum was upon the whole much preferred, because it was so "cooling" in hot weather, and then it was "warming" in the winter when the men went into the woods "chopping." It was as great a discovery as that made by the Arkansas quack, whose wonderful bark would vomit if the wood was scraped upwards, and would purge if scraped downwards. At these times a hogshead of rum, placed upon the sidewalk, was sure to be pumped dry before night, in filling kegs, jugs, and bottles. Now, these bottles were not small affairs of glass, holding a half pint, or quart, but were made of wood, hooped with iron, sometimes with brass and of generous capacity, holding from a gallon upwards. There was a hole in one side, with a well-fitted stopper of wood, which kept its place well, until the bottle was elevated in the air, and a pair of lips were placed under it. Some of these bottles were very ancient in appearance, and I have no doubt had gone down from father to son, one generation after another, and very likely the bottle triumphed at last. Cider brandy was brought into the city in great quantities and shipped mostly to New York; apples were raised in abundance and were made into cider; it was a part of the farmer's business and relied upon as one of his means of support. After calculating how much would carry him through the year — and he was generous in his calculations — the overplus was taken to the distillery, and made an article of merchandise, and bought and sold by our merchants in town, without a suspicion of wrong-doing, just as their grandfathers before them had bought and sold men, women, and children. It may surprise many to learn that cider brandy was sold at as low a price as twenty-two cents a gallon. It does not often come to any community

to put their stamp of disapproval even upon a great evil, at its first conception. It begins its life so insidiously, and is linked in with so much "respectability," that it meets with tolerance, or general approval, before men recognize how dangerous it is. And we may pardon some of the sins of our ancestors, and not hold them up to everlasting reproof, when it is possible that our descendants will blame us equally, for our degrading sin of drunnkeness and the awful destruction of human life by violence.

There was a small sign nailed on the store, of "Cash or Salt for Flaxseed." Flax was then in general cultivation, and the seed was readily bought by our merchants. It was no uncommon thing for 100 tierces, or 700 bushels, to be shipped at one time; it mostly went to New York, and the farmer was glad to exchange it for salt which he greatly needed.

The competition between buyers was great; the farmer was master of the situation, and though it was supposed there was a standard price for flaxseed and for salt, yet occasionally the merchant would drop into the barrel or bag, a pint or a quart more of salt than some of his neighbors, "just for the sake of a trade, you know." The stories which have come down to us about some of these men, all dead long ago, show that these lasted longer than a lifetime, and also show the active competition which then existed.

Eliphalet Terry lived in a house just north of and very near his store; it was occupied for several years after he left it by different persons, among them Dr. J. L. Comstock, and was finally removed to the corner of Brook and Pine Streets, where it still stands.

The Terrys were men of note in the town; though somewhat different in temper, yet both were highly respected, and were identified in various ways with interests of importance. Eliphalet was president of the Hartford Fire Insurance Company, and Roderick was president of

the Exchange Bank, which positions they retained until the time of their deaths.

It is related of Eliphalet Terry, that he pledged his fortune in raising money to pay the losses of the company by the great fire in New York in 1835. The losses were promptly met and the insurance company was carried safely through. His boldness and courage were rewarded by a large increase of business and the establishment of a reputation which the company has ever maintained.

He was very influential in obtaining subscriptions for the theological seminary at East Windsor. When he applied to A. S. Beckwith he was told "that he would think of it, but what security would he give?" Mr. Terry replied that "he would give him a draft upon the Lord." Meeting him some time after, Mr. Beckwith said, "I have been down to the bank of your brother, and find that the Lord keeps no account there."

He was a strict observer of Sunday, and believed in enforcing the law against ordinary labor on that day. Living as he did so near the junction of the two great lines of travel into the city, he could not avoid observing many instances when, in his opinion, the law was broken. Hartford was an important market for cattle and horses and mules, for shipment to the West Indies. Not infrequently, being near their journey's end on Sunday, their owners would endeavor to drive them to the slaughter-house or stables, but they little knew the positive and perhaps autocratic man they were to meet at the corner. "Run down to brother Seth," said he, "and tell him to stop this drove," and they were stopped.

Few of us now remember the great number of emigrants' wagons which passed through the town on their way to the west. Large, heavy, and canvass covered, they held the household goods, and gods, and goddesses, with a large brass kettle swinging from the hind axletree. I have seen just enough of these to understand the description,

and to realize how this has been repeated by one generation after another, until the "prairie schooner" has passed even beyond the Rocky Mountains. On one Sunday Mr. Terry saw one of these huge wagons passing down the road, violating the law in his opinion. It was the usual order: "Run down to brother Seth, and tell him to stop this wagon;" and brother Seth, who was a justice of the peace, felt bound to regard the complaint made to him. But "brother Seth," who as an officer was regardful of the law, doubtless entertained, and I feel pretty certain that he did, very different opinions as an ordinary man. He was wholly unlike his brother Eliphalet, was more liberal in his views, had an excellent fund of common sense, was wonderfully honest, and had that happy balance of mind and judicious discernment which enables some men not to observe some things which are not exactly right, but whose recognition brings more of harm than of good. And he had also that which neither of his brothers possessed, especially the elder, an infinite fund of humor, which showed itself in expressions the most quaint with a countenance and manner the most sober. Anyone who knew the late J. G. E., and how highly he regarded Mr. Terry, will realize how much he must have possessed of kindness and good fellowship to have won the good opinion of so reticent and eccentric a man.

And so the big covered wagon was turned into the yard of the tavern below, to remain until the journey could be resumed on Monday. Robert Turner heard of it, and expostulated with his neighbor Eliphalet; it was a great trial to these people, who were probably poor, and could not well bear this additional expense. "What would you do?" said Mr. Terry. "Do?" said Robert, "Do? I would give them half a dollar and send them along."

Anson Gleason, who worked in the tool shop of Leonard Kennedy, and afterwards went as a missionary among the Indians at the West, complained to Nathaniel

Goodwin that his neighbor, Robert Turner, was making hay on Sunday. Mr. G. was a justice of the peace, and was therefore a proper officer to consider the matter, so he said, "This is very wrong, Mr. Gleason, very wrong; it must be seen to," and sent him away. But with that spirit of judicious liberality which characterized him, he doubtless considered that his neighbor would do nothing which could be considered as an infraction of the law.

So Mr. Gleason applied to Judge Peters, who replied that he had not qualified as a justice, and besides, he could not consent to act, as there were his neighbors Sam Marsh and Tom Belden, who would work on Sunday, and he should be compelled to notice them. And then, he was obliged occasionally to make hay himself on the same day, so that he had better get another to bring the action.

North of him was *Samuel Marsh*, who had been a merchant, but had failed in business. The house was of some pretension, with a wide hall and large stairway; the railing and balusters were of some dark wood highly polished and carved, and would have delighted the heart of any antiquarian. I only remember them when, as a physician many years afterwards, I climbed the easy steps, the treads broad and the risings low, and the carved wood was as black as ebony. In early times, I am told, that it was not easy to arrest one who was in debt, if he kept within his own house. Unfortunate Mr. Marsh happened to be in debt to the Cowles' of Farmington, and they could not get their money, and so closely did he keep himself that they could not arrest him. Finally the sheriff, disguised as a peddler of rye flour, made him a visit, and offered some of it for sale. So honest a looking farmer was he, that Mr. Marsh threw off his usual caution, and left his house to look at the flour in the wagon; and then the "honest farmer" at once became the ingenious sheriff, who arrested and put him in jail. This was in the days when im-

prisonment for debt had not been abolished, when a man who owned no property by his own account, but was supposed to have concealed it, could be put in jail. If he swore that he owned nothing he could be let "out on the limits," as it was called. These were well specified, and rather narrow, but woe to the unfortunate debtor if he went beyond them. So Mr. Marsh took the oath, and was "on the limits" for some time; it gave him fresh air and exercise, and opportunity to roam about a small part of the city, but he was not able to reach his own house. I remember many times seeing men walking slowly about, who, the boys said, were "on the limits." They were confined or restrained as long as the creditor would pay the debtor's board, which meant as long as he felt decidedly mad; and the anger of some of them continued for a long while.

There is a story current, that Mr. Marsh, while on the limits, hired or bought, or procured to be purchased for him, a small house just south of the old jail, where he dwelt, and so escaped the confinement in prison. A friend relates that being at one time in that neighborhood, he saw Mr. Marsh in this house, rocking in his chair, as if in perfect enjoyment. The expedients of some persons to avoid payment of a debt would seem to be greater than to pay the debt itself.

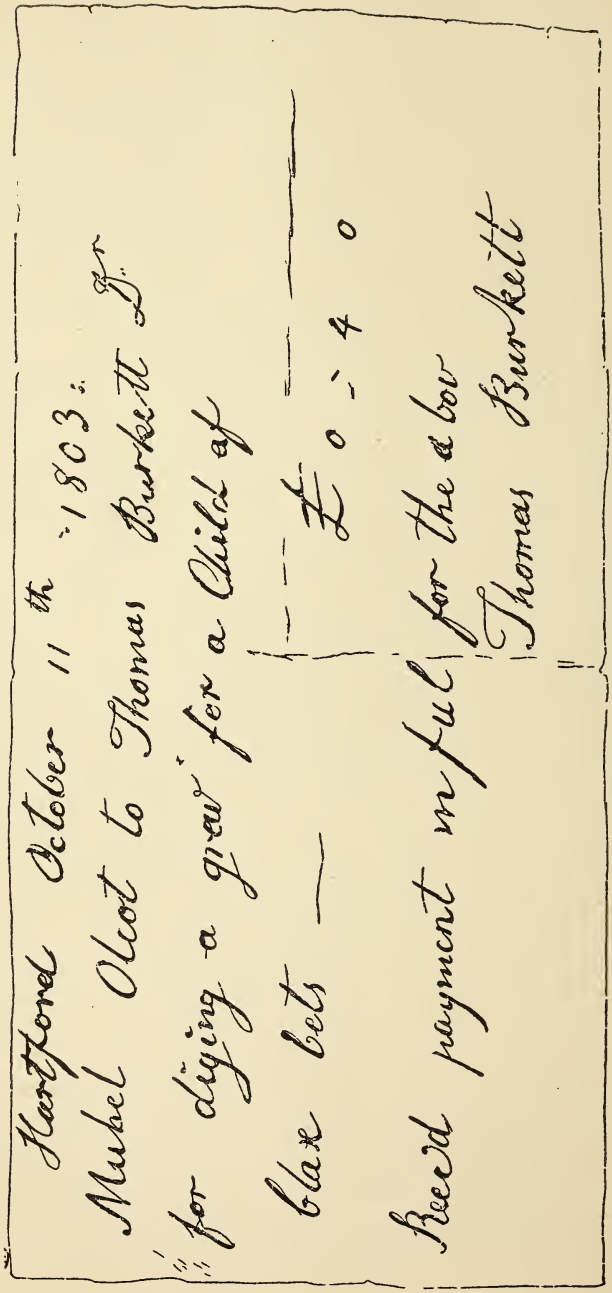
Farther north, where Warren Rowley now lives, was *Michael Olcott*, a retired merchant, who had formerly been engaged in the West India trade. He was tall, of good appearance, gentlemanly in his manner, and a sound churchman. He was one of the wardens of Christ church from 1813 to 1818. He was also one of thirty-four persons who in 1796 "agreed to join and associate themselves into a religious society by the style and title of the Episcopal Society of the City of Hartford, under the direction and government of the Right Reverend Bishop of Episcopal Clergy." The house in which he lived is now standing in good preservation, on the corner of Main

and Belden Streets, about 200 feet back from the road. Formerly there were a number of large mulberry trees about it, which furnished abundant fruit for birds — and boys. He was at one time quartermaster-general of the State, and major-commandant of the Governor's Horse Guard. He had three sisters, one of whom married the Rev. Dr. Barry of New Jersey, the father of the late Dr. James W. Barry of this city; the others lived with him. He died in May, 1829.

Among the papers of Mr. Olcott was found the bill, a fac simile of which is given (see page 78).

Thomas Burkett was, I suppose, the sexton appointed by the town. Mr. Parker finds no mention of him "in the records of the First Ecclesiastical Society from 1780 to 1820." The only reference to him that I discover, after a not very thorough examination of the town records, is the following, which would indicate pretty clearly that he was the sexton employed by the town, and had the care of the cemetery near the meeting-house. At a town meeting January 25, 1803, *Voted*, "That the sum of forty shillings lawful money be allowed Mr. Burkett for ringing the Bell in addition to the sum usually allowed him." Very likely "blax bets" was, or had been a slave in Mr. Olcott's family; the spelling of words in the bill was not worse than that of some of the clerks of the school districts.

Thomas Belden occupied the house on the north corner of Belden's lane. It was built for him by Colonel Samuel Belcher about 1807 or 1808, and the reported cost was $5,000. It is a stately mansion, still standing, and is in wonderfully good condition, a credit to the builder, who was one of the best workmen of his time. Mr. Belden was originally a pump-maker, near the river, and resided in Ferry Street, where he soon opened a store, having got into the West India trade. He owned a woolen factory in Agawam, and a distillery in Simsbury. It is reported of him, or of his son, that he once asked


Hartford October 11th 1803.
Mabel Olcot to Thomas Burkett Dr
for diging a grave for a Child of
blax bets —
£0 : 4 0
Recd payment in full for the above
Thomas Burkett

FAC SIMILE OF BILL FOR GRAVE-DIGGING.

the late S. S. Batterson to deliver a temperance lecture in his distillery, and the response came that he would if allowed to choose the text, which was from Jonah, chapter 2, part of the second verse: "Out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice." The lecture was delivered. He was a man of very marked character, positive, and outspoken. He possessed his little peculiarities, and never had fear of manifesting them. He was one of those Republicans who voted as he talked, and was never afraid to talk. When the majority for the Federalists was always great in the town, and men of his party were derided and almost ostracised, it required a will which was strong, and a courage which was fearless, to "stand up and be counted." This independence in thought and action was so marked a characteristic, that it could not be expected to be lost in the succeeding generation. When he requested a thing to be done, he wished it to be done *at once.* During his last sickness, lying in bed, he was irritated by a noisy fellow, who created a great disturbance about the house, by shouting, and beating upon the door. He requested his nurse to go out and send him away, saying that he was disturbing Mr. Belden, who was quite sick. The request acted much like a red flag to an infuriated bull, and only led him to pound the louder. So all of Mr. Belden's energy came back to him, and, rushing from his bed, he opened the door suddenly, and with a well-directed blow sent the fellow sprawling down the steps. He went back to his bed and never left it again.

Mr. Belden was a liberal contributor toward the Universalist Church. Dr. Bacon could not be supposed to look upon such a movement with more favor than his pastor. "We have," said he, "a fire insurance company, a marine insurance company, and now we have a hell-fire insurance company." If Mr. Belden was a man of marked individuality, so was Dr. Bacon. They were very unlike,

for while one had great faith in the Center Church and Dr. Hawes, the other had very little; both, however, had very positive opinions and little hesitation in expressing them.

Mr. Belden was a wealthy man, and was influential in securing a charter for the Farmers and Mechanics' Bank; a democratic legislature could not well refuse to accommodate its democratic friends, even though they had been clamoring against banks generally. The influence which these could exert was supposed to be thrown against their party, and as some of their officers were active party men, there was probably foundation for this belief. In the distribution of the stock the Democracy were remembered, and the bank was known for some time as the Democratic Bank.

An extensive orchard of apple and pear trees north of the house lay upon the road, and extended to *James Sheldon's*. *Hugh Waterman* also lived here. Between this quite old brown house and that of *Harris Olcott*, there was a small one-story building occupied by colored people. Olcott had quite a large family of boys and girls, and some of his descendants are yet livivg in the city. Next was *James Anderson*, who worked in Leonard Kennedy's tool shop. A son of the same name was working with him, but after a "revival" he studied for the ministry, and was for a long time and until he died a Congregational minister at Manchester, Vermont. Next north lived *Charles Church*, who was a farmer and teamster in a moderate way.

Mr. Keney informs me that there was formerly a pond near the present east end of Seyms Street, which extended into the highway, so that foot passengers were obliged to go into the street to get around it; the water was clear, and travelers were accustomed to water their horses here. It must originally have had close connection with Patten's pond. It had been filled in before the time of which I write, for there was no water there then. In his chapter

on "Black Governors in Connecticut," Sceava (I. W. Stuart), referring to Peleg Nott, who belonged to Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth, says: "When elected governor, a curious accident befell him. The place of election was on the Neck, near the north burying-yard." The horse of Peleg ran with him, and threw him into "a pond, which then lay a little south of the cemetery mentioned." This, undoubtedly, was the pond of which Mr. Keney speaks, and the one alluded to by Sceava, as it was near the place of inauguration, and being partly in the roadway, it was very convenient for the horse. I do not think that this particular spot, the precise location of this important historical fact, the unfortunate accident to the last of the Black Governors, would ever have been known, save for the excellent memory of our excellent friend. It now takes its place with other notable cases of like importance, the truth of which has been established by long and patient research.*

John Bowles, a shoemaker, lived in the next house. Then came *Richard Wadsworth*, and next *Archibald Greenfield*, whose house was on the south corner of the present

* These small ponds are numerous all over the town; the origin of them has been a matter of curious speculation, but has not been satisfactorily explained. They are mostly round, or nearly so, sometimes in a clay soil, and sometimes in one of sand, but always, as far as I know, resting upon a blue clay, with more or less of peat or peaty moss at the bottom and sides. Usually they are not supplied by springs, but receive water from the drainage of the land, and rarely become dry. A few rods in diameter would be the measurement of most of them. These ponds are scattered all over New England, especially in the southern part, some of them of large size, even lakes, or lakelets, but the majority are much like to our own. How many can be found in Hartford I know not, but Prof. G. F. Wright, in the "*Ice Age in North America*," says that "the southeastern portion of Massachusetts abounds in them in a special degree, as before remarked. Plymouth county is little less than a ganglion of such glacial lakes, with their inclosing deposits — Plymouth township alone being reputed to have three hundred and sixty." p. 320.

It is his opinion that these ponds and lakes are due to the immense glacier which, many thousand years since, covered a large northern portion of this continent, which, slipping down over this immense area, was driven into the ocean, or melted by warmer air. The large lakes were produced by the damming of a valley by the earth and rocks borne along and deposited by the glacier; and the smaller ponds by the masses of ice in great fragments driven into the earth as it passed over them; and also by the deposit of earth and rocks, which were set free by the melting of the ice, or by currents of water running through or under the glacier.

Pine Street. A grandson, Archibald Greenfield Loomis, is now cashier of the Ætna National Bank.

"Nigger Lane," and the present Pine Street, and the North Cemetery have already been mentioned. North of it stood the house of *Joseph Cook*, a very respectable colored man, whose property was afterwards purchased by Stephen Page, a former sexton, and is now included in the cemetery. His gravestone may be found at the side of one of the roadways, and reads as follows:

MR. JOSEPH COOK,

A man of Colour, was born in Virginia, free, came to Hartford about 1802, and died March 25, 1832.

He had a sound mind, was industrious and honest, but more than all he was a Christian, a much-esteemed brother of the Baptist Church. In his life, especially in his last sickness, he exemplified the peculiar power of Religion of Jesus to exalt and sustain the humble. Reader, as you survey this spot and the regions of the dead around you and raise your tho'ts above, and reflect on what Joseph now is, remember that it was faith in Christ that gave him the victory.

He was one day soliciting subscriptions for a church for the colored people. "Why, Mr. Cook," said one, 'your friends do not appear to have paid much themselves." "No, sir," he replied, "our folks are good to 'scribe, but poor pay."

At an accidental gathering in the north part of the town, Cook introduced his project for building a church for the colored people in Talcott Street. They listened, and gave him encouraging words, but there was no pecuniary response. "Gentlemen," said he, "I don't doubt your good 'tentions, but I had rather see your names on this paper."

Then came in succession the dwelling of *George Church*, still standing between the cemetery and St. Thomas's Church; *Jeremiah Graves*, a carpenter and builder, who was quite an enterprising man. He removed to Jacksonville, Illinois, about 1833–4. The Rev. *Henry Grew* was next to him, who has been described to me as a "sort of

Baptist," who was not in full communion with his brethren, but had seceded and held service with a few followers in different places. This report led me to inquire more about him, for I only recollect him when he lived on the east side of Burr Street, a short distance below the present Pleasant Street. Mr. C. G. Munyan, the clerk of the Baptist society, has kindly sent me the following, from the records, June 1, 1811:

"After prayer took into consideration the case of our elder, Henry Grew, who had withdrawn himself from the pastoral care and fellowship of this church, on account of some existing differences of sentiment respecting the Order of Christ's House.

"The church labored to show Elder Grew that the step he had taken would . . . expose him to the loss of his usefulness in a great measure, if not altogether, and desired him to retrace his steps and take his place in the church, and then if he wished to remove his relation, the church would give him a letter stating particularly the ground of our separation, and part in fellowship on those points in which we were in fellowship, for as he now stood the church could view him in no other light than as a disorderly brother, however much they respected him for his piety and sincerity as a Christian, consequently could not ask him to preach or administer to us in any way while in this situation."

"But Mr. Grew persisted in justification of his procedure. The church had frequent meetings to consider Mr. Grew's case; committees were appointed to labor with him, and at last a council of churches was called which gave good advice, but all to no avail. Grew persisted in his course, and on September 29, 1811, the church unanimously withdrew fellowship with him, and he was excluded from membership."

He was pastor of the church from 1807 to 1811.

Luther Savage occupied a fine house north of him. On the west was quite a forest known as "Savage's

woods." This is now incorporated in the Spring Grove Cemetery, but a number of the trees are still standing, to the injury of many of the beautiful monuments. After the death of Mr. Savage the property passed through the hands of several owners, each one making a handsome gain in price, it is said.

At an elevation above the road, and some distance from it, lived *Josiah Capen*, a marked character, whose slaughter-house was guarded by a brindled dog, a perfect terror to me as I passed on the way to school; you, too, Mr. Burr, felt the power of his teeth. I do not wish to say anything against this dog, for he has been dead these many years, and has passed out of the memory of most persons, probably. And I remember also what is told us about speaking ill of the dead, or that we should maintain silence, if good cannot be spoken. But this particular dog cannot be forgotten or forgiven; for why did he run at me so often, as I was innocently on my way to school, a little fellow with his little dinner basket on his arm, and his little dinner in it? And why did he keep me on the top of the fence post, on a cold day in November, overcome with fear, and expecting every moment to fall into his big jaws?

If ever a good Samaritan showed his humanity, it was when the driver of a passing brick team drove off the monster and kindly set me at liberty. I'll not forgive the dog!

Mr. Capen was accustomed to sell his meat from the wagon, and so traveled up and down, accommodating people who lived away from the market, and good meat it was, too, and very particular he was about it. One day, it is related, that Hez. Burr, commonly called "Ki Burr," began inspecting and handling a nice leg of mutton, as if he were anxious to purchase. The patience of Mr. Capen was sorely tried at the delay, and the fingering, and so he brought matters to a close by saying: "Mr. Burr, do you mean to buy that mutton?" Now Mr. Burr was not

as expeditious in business as some persons, and he replied, slowly: "No, I think not to-day;" when Mr. Capen, seizing the meat, threw it into the street, without a word.

Occasionally he would at night drive his horse in a sulky through the street at the top of his speed. Then there were shoutings and roarings, which made me tremble lying in bed. Frequently he would drive up to the very door of some whom he wished to please, or more likely to terrify. And on these occasions he would draw out his jews-harp, a monstrous affair, the like of which no boy ever saw, and playing a few tunes which could be heard over the whole neighborhood, end his serenade with yells which would excite the admiration of an Indian. His house is still standing, with some additions, on the south corner of Capen Street.

There was an old and unoccupied house near the handsome elm tree in front of No. 933 Main Street, the residence of the late L. B. Hart. It was owned by Capt. George Cook, and had been occupied previously by Harris Olcott, his brother-in-law. It has been told me that some old residents remembered this tree when it was as large as one's leg; a very common object of comparison, and only equaled in frequency when speaking of snakes, by saying that "it was as large as my arm." Miss Goodwin says that this house was formerly known as "Stocking's Inn." I have found no one who was aware of this, but within a few days George Cook tells me that thirty-five years ago there was in the barn of his uncle Moses a tavern sign, on which was painted "I. Stockings Inn."*

*Note from John E. Marsh.

"The tract of country between Clark and Vine Streets was mostly covered with woods. Where Capen Street now is there was only a private lane leading to and ending at Capen's slaughter-house, which stood about where Mr. Robert Cairnes' house now is, near the corner of Capen and Clark Streets. Just north of the slaughter-house was a tract of two or three acres, more or less, called the "Sand blow." Its surface was made up of patches of smooth, white sand, with here and

We have now come to the School-house, which you and I both attended sixty-five or more years ago. An account of this, with a history of the district, will be given hereafter.

About an eighth of a mile beyond the school-house was the cooper's shop of *Samuel Beckwith;* his dwelling-house was near it. He was a deacon in the Baptist Church from 1790 to 1833, when he died. I never heard him called by any name but "Deacon Becket." If a stranger had inquired for Mr. Beckwith in that neighborhood, he probably would have received as an answer, "No such person lives about here." In the same way Wadsworth was often pronounced "Wadsur," and Goodwin almost universally "Goodin." "Say, Wadsur," said the deacon one day in the winter, as we were going into the woods, "say, bring me some hoop-poles when you come back, will you?"

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there a white birch, scraggy apple tree, bunches of tall, coarse grass, and masses of low, running, blackberry vines.

The locality was also a noted habitat of black snakes — the common black snake, *Coluber constrictor;* and his congener *Coluber Alleghaniensis*, or racer, characterized by a white ring about its neck. A resident of the neighborhood (my father, Guy C. Marsh), once attacked one of the latter of large size, and was in turn attacked by the snake and driven from the field. He used afterward to say that he never before believed that the black snake would attack a man, but this experience had soundly converted him.

These stretches of clean, level sand afforded a favorite field for the larger boys of the neighborhood for playing base ball and 'two old cat,' especially on 'Fast day,' when the weather was good."

[The common name of *racer* is applied to both of these *Colubers*. Probably the latter is not found in Connecticut. Storer does not mention it in his description of the reptiles of Massachusetts. DeKay, in his reptiles of New York, says that he has never seen it, though he has heard of it among the Highlands. Holbrook, our most exact herpetologist, says that "its probable range extends through the Alleghanies." His description of the two reptiles shows very marked differences. DeKay states "that hitherto it has been confounded with the ordinary black snake; but it is at once distinguished from that species by the carinated scales." Neither of them have a white ring around the neck, but both of them have a white or yellowish white throat. We have no black snake with "a white ring about its neck," except a small species found about stone walls, or in damp woods, about twelve or fourteen inches in length. Both grow to a large size and great length, and run with great rapidity: sometimes they will attack a man, especially *Coluber constrictor*, which is quite courageous. But the stories that were formerly told in the Neck about our black snake were marvelous. The snake attacks, the man runs, the snake follows with his head waist high, but never succeeds in reaching his victim; the procession passes, its members keeping at the same distance from one another, until the snake, becoming wearied, drops behind! R.]

Next to him was *Theodore Spencer*, a blacksmith whose shop was on the low ground at the corner of the road leading to Blue Hills, a very worthy man, a good blacksmith, and a soldier — "artificer" — of the Revolution. *Benjamin Spencer* lived next to him. These three houses were on the high ground now occupied by General Hillyer.

The road, which is now called Westland Street, doubtless had a specific name, but is not remembered by me. Miss Goodwin thought it was called Abbe's Lane, from a man of that name who lived in a small house on the west. I recollect "Deaf Abbe" very well; he was accustomed to travel through the Neck, stopping for a day or so in a place, or more if there was rye to be threshed. His wife had got the better of him in a little affair, and knocked him on the head with an axe, so that afterwards he was very nearly deaf, and almost demented. I think the boys teased him somewhat, as is their nature with such poor creatures.*

There was no house farther north, until we come to that of *John Sheldon*, a man of few words but of strong opinions. One who knew him says that the boys were all remarkable for their great strength. One day Strong Mather, having had some difficulty with them, came down and said to him that he was about to give them a flogging. "Now look here," said John, "you see that little fellow" — the late Henry Sheldon — "sitting on that stool; don't touch him, but you may tackle the rest as soon as you please." And Mr. M. went away. Next to Mr. Sheldon lived *Asa Goodwin*. Near the north end were *Timothy Marsh*, *John Millard*, and *Edward Marsh*.

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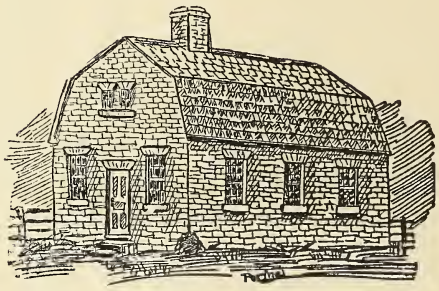
*Mr. Thomas Sisson informs me, that he remembers Abbe well; he traveled through West Hartford helping the farmers in reaping, threshing, and dressing flax. He was troubled with everted and granular eyelids, which led the boys of the west division to ask him where he got such eyes. "Up to Grandison Barber's, picking up potatoes, and I got cow-lice in 'em." But the bad eyes were more likely due to hard cider.

This completes the list of persons living on both sides of the road to Windsor, from the present Tunnel to the Hartford line on the north. There may be some living who can, or think they can, detect inaccuracies, but for the year 1825 it is believed to be essentially correct.

FIRST NORTH SCHOOL DISTRICT.

VI.

THE DISTRICT SCHOOL.



THE SCHOOL-HOUSE OF 1803.

WE have now come to the school-house, a place long to be remembered, and always of interest. Mr. Hoadly tells me that in 1761 the town was divided into two school districts, one north and one south of the Little River, and this continued until 1798, when the North district was divided into three separate districts. The act which passed the Assembly May 28, 1798, specifies the limits of this particular district as follows: "Beginning at the point where the city line strikes Connecticut River, then running due west to Brick-kiln Brook, and then following the brook north to the Windsor line." This was to be called the First North School District, and was a very large one, being about two and a quarter or two and a half miles in length, from Belden's Lane to Windsor; and a very wide one also, extending from the Connecticut River to the run now called Gully Brook. The people,

however, lived mostly on both sides of the road to Windsor. Though you, Mr. A. E. B., resided on the Albany road, yet, being east of Brick-kiln Brook, you fell into this district, and so went to the school-house "Up Neck," where the foundations of a good common education were laid for you and many others.

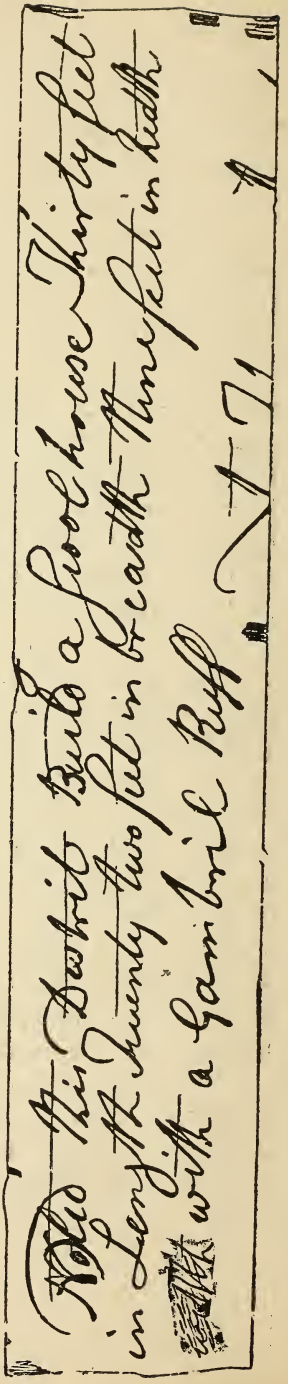
The record book of the clerk, which is now before me, commences as follows: "The Records and Entries of the dooings of the 1st North Scool district, in Hartford, November 12, 1798." A meeting was held on the 16th of the same month, at which Captain John Cook was chosen moderator, Roger Wadsworth, clerk, Captain James Goodwin, "Treashurer"; and Captain James Goodwin, John Sheldon, and Theodore Spencer, "Committy." A few days later it was "*Voted*, that there be a Publick Scool kept by a good able Teacher, or Scool Master to begin as soon as may be from the present time (21st.) & End the 1st of April 1799."

And it did begin, I suppose, about that time, for there is an entry in the treasurer's book April 3, 1799, of cash paid "Horris Hayden, Scool Master 46.00." and of "cash paid for Boarding Scool Master, 28.00."

A temporary house had been used, but it seems to have been difficult to fix upon a permanent location, and so application was made to the selectmen; for, at a town meeting, April 8, 1798, it was "*Voted* that the Selectmen be authorized to fix upon & set out a proper place for a school house in the North School district in this Town in the highway leading to Windsor where it will be least prejudicial to the public Travel, with the consent & approbation of the owners of the lands adjacent."

It does not appear that any action was taken by them, or that the district could agree upon a location, for after several votes that a school-house be built, and encountering the usual difficulties in treating the same, there is,

upon record, the report of Joseph Hart, John Caldwell, and Enoch Perkins, who, living out of the district, were supposed to be not interested in the matter, and they say, December 21, 1799, that they "fix upon the place herein after described for the purpose aforesaid, viz.: Beginning 4 feet north of a Building erected by number of subscribers for a school house in said district, and thence extending south ninety feet — The front of Isaac Prat's lot to be the west line of said place, and the east line thereof to be at such distance from front of said Prat's lot as may be found convenient for the erecting said school-house on distance not to exceed forty feet." Although the location was thus established, it does not appear that direct efforts were made to build until April 14, 1803, when the following vote was passed: That "Aaron Cook, Leonard Kennedy, James Goodwin, James Anderson, Samuel Beckwith, William Goodwin, and Roger Wadsworth be a committy to prepare a plan for a Scool house and lay it before the next meeting, with the necessary Expense of Building." And on the 25th of April, it was "*Voted*, this District Build a Brick Scool house that will accomidate the district according to the Further Directions of Size & Heidth & form of Ruff." And on the 3d day of May of the same year it was



The various votes passed at the different meetings since the organization of this "First North School District" specify that the school shall be kept by a "master" for four or five months during the winter season, usually four months; and by a "mistriss" or "marm" during the summer, usually for five months. Horace Hayden was the first teacher, and was paid $46; $28 was paid for his board. This was for four months. On the 28th day of March, 1799, it was

"*Voted*, that their be a Scool kept 5 months the Ensuing Summer in the 1st North School district in Hartford, to begin the 13th day of May next, to be kept by a Woman or Marm as Teacher of sd scool."

Elsey Hall was the "marm," and she was paid $40 in different sums between December 11, 1799, and October 21, 1800. The furniture for the school — aside from desks and benches, I suppose — was rather limited, for there is found upon the treasurer's book only a disbursement of 39 cents for a "pail and dipper," and 20 cents for a "Broom."

As the building stood in the highway, no land was purchased for the site; but I find that in November, 1807, it was

"*Voted*, that George Wadsworth and Leonard Kennedy act as agents for said district, and apply to the selectmen of the Town of Hartford for a Deed of the Land on which the school-house now stands."

Not unfrequently repairs were required upon the building, and votes were passed providing for payment of the same. It is not possible to ascertain what these were, except in the matter of broken glass. In March, 1811, it was

"*Voted*, That if any Damage be done by the scholers to the School House in sd District they or their parrants Masters or Guardeans shall Make it good."

This was the school which we both attended in 1825, and where we both learned something, I hope, and believe

we did, beyond the three "R's," "readin, ritin, and rithmetic," and spelling.

I remember no other instruction attempted; possibly geography, but not to my recollection. When one finds himself well founded in these elements of education, he is well fitted for what may come afterwards. There was one other item of a boy's education, however, not usually learned so much in the school-house as out of it; and that should be included in the R's also, viz., "rastlin." It well took its place among us in that day, and was as valuable and creditable as are the various games of the present time, considered necessary before a boy enters college; and to be prosecuted vigorously, boisterously, and brutally afterwards also. If we did not make as much fuss about our little exercises, neither did we consider it necessary to learn about "rushers, half-backs, and full back," nor to "paint the town red" after our contests.

Let us look at the record of the clerk at a meeting held on October 27, 1825, and at an adjourned meeting on November 1st. It was

"*Voted*, that Mr. John Russell be Moderator of this meeting.

"That the Auditor's doings of examining the Treasurer's Book be allowed.

"That there be a School kept by a Master five months the Ensuing winter.

"That Richard Sheldon, Geo. Cook, Abner P. Wadsworth be a Committee the Ensuing year.

"That the Master board around with the scholars.

"That each scholar furnish ten feet of ceasend hard wood or green walnut or white ash to be inspected by the Master."

William Kirkham, of Newington, was the "Master." It was a lucky time for the boys, when he came to the house, in his "boarding around;" we were certain of receiving an extra allowance of cake and preserves. I judge from conversation which was heard at that time, that he had a preference for some families over others, in his peregrinations. He went home on Saturday, but returned

on Monday morning, in time for opening the school at 9 o'clock.

The long blue camlet cloak which he wore must have been but a poor protection as he came up past Cedar Mountain, over Rocky Hill, through the city and into the Neck, on some of the winter mornings; for I suppose that in earlier times, and even at that time, the people generally were not as well clad as at present. He usually opened the school with prayer, and was diligent in preserving order at the same time. If any boy was unruly, or did not pay sufficient attention, he did not hesitate to remind him of his duty by a tap upon his head with a ferrule, the praying being continued at the same time and without hesitancy, as if no interruption had occurred.

I have before me a writing-book of some scholar which afterwards belonged to him. At the top of the page is written, in a neat hand, different sentences, which have been copied, some down the full page, others only partially so. The vacant spaces appear to have been filled in with various matters which concerned him, at different periods of his life. He was evidently a professional school-master, for the entries mention Newington, Wethersfield, Farmington, and Springfield where he taught; and there is one district which is not specified which I judge from the names of the pupils to be Griswoldville. There is an entry that he began keeping the North District School in Hartford, November, 1824, '25, '26, and '27, for the winter term of five months. He records the names of forty boys and forty-three girls for the term of 1826. I recognize the names of the following only as now living: Edward Waterman, Edward Church, Charles Mather, Timothy Mather, and Ruth Olcott, who married Lot Sheldon. There are some brief notes of a diary, which show him to have been a man of a reflective mind, and together with the various texts in the copy books, possibly morbidly religious. There are charges for various jobs which he did for his neighbors. He was evi-

dently engaged in some work at the mill pond, in the south part of the parish, for there are charges for repairing the still, and for carding rolls, and occasionally for the sale of brandy, at 12½ cents per quart. On one page the pupil had written the line which had been set him to copy, nearly to the bottom of the page, viz.: "Let us, while blest with life and health, prepare for Death." There was room under it, however, for the following charge:

"Dr. Archibald Hall to William Kirkham, Dr. November 20, 1828, To 1 Gall. Brandy, high pf."

The price is not mentioned, but "*paid*" is marked against it.

Roger Welles is charged September, 1826, "for the use of the still 2 nights @ 1s pr night, .34." I am informed that there was a distillery for cider brandy and a woolen factory at the mill pond at one time. The book is a curiosity.

Some years after the time about which I am writing, when the Arsenal School District was organized, he was negotiating with the committee, Timothy Sheldon and Moses Burr, about being employed as a teacher. "Shall I be obliged to board around," asked Mr. Kirkham. "Yes, you will," said Timothy. "Well, I know what that means," he answered, "I shall be obliged to live on *squn* all winter." Now what is *squn*, and what is the origin of the word? It was unknown to me, and never heard before, though my authority for the anecdote said that it was formerly in use up neck. Mr. Starkweather was familiar with it, and so was George Cook, but many of whom inquiries were made knew nothing about it.

When the farmer kills his hogs, it is customary to fry on the same day, or the next, certain portions for the family dinner, consisting of the liver, pancreas or sweet bread, round robin, and perhaps the kidneys; possibly some of the thoracic viscera also. This was called SQUN. All the hogs in the district would not be killed at the same time, but would be kept and sacrificed one after

another, for the fresh meat for the master as he came to board with the different families. So we can understand how pathetic the exclamation of Mr. Kirkham was, as he saw before him his daily winter ration. I think he did not engage with that committee. It is possible to have too much of *squn.*

Considerable attention was also given to spelling, the book of Noah Webster being used; and here, as well as in reading, the girls were always superior to the boys. The writing was from copy, furnished by the master, in books of our own purchase; some of them were blotted, and more than slightly; and in most of them the letters were not gracefully formed. What could be expected from boys who only attended for four or at most five months in the year, and that, too, very irregularly? For the services of many were required at home, in helping their fathers during the winter as well as summer, in different portions of farm work. However desirous the parents might be that their sons should acquire an education, there was the counteracting necessity of provision for the home; and further, I do not think there was such a regard for the constant attendance of the pupil as at present. They had been brought up in this way themselves, and naturally thought it was sufficient for their children. And in addition to all this, the distance from the school-house was so great for many, that the mothers were reluctant to send them out, on very stormy or cold days. In deep snows, when the only pathway was the traveled road, it was severe upon the little ones, and those who were feeble, and there were feeble ones then as well as now, though we are apt to say that the children of those days were "as tough as pine knots." Those who survived their exposures were "tough," but too many went down under the trial. As a consequence the school was irregularly attended, and the scholars did not make the progress which they ought. But upon the whole, the common school fulfilled its purpose tolerably well and gave

the prime elements of an education, to be enlarged if there was a desire, or future opportunity, and it may be fairly questioned whether there was for the majority a greater desire, or a further opportunity. There is this to be said also, that there was no opportunity for complaint of a multiplication of studies, and as far as I know no injury to tender brains from undue mental pressure ; there is something to be learned aside from what is learned in books.

All writing was done with the common quill ; where geese were kept, the home supply was sufficient. To make a proper pen was quite an art, and the master was pen-maker for nearly the whole school. His knife was small and sharp, and so he was called upon, for the "nib" needed repairs very often. The "Barlow" knife, which every boy was supposed to have in his pocket, was too large for this purpose, and then its edge was blunted from frequent hackings of the desk or bench ; and, further, there was great satisfaction in calling upon the master for this service, and a great deal more of satisfaction if a dozen called his attention at the same time. The copies were the usual ones, simple letters, words, and sentences ; "Contentment is great gain ;" "Children, obey your parents ;" "Many men of many minds, many birds of many kinds ; many fishes in the sea, many men do not agree ;" which was especially truthful as regards the management of a district school. One day, taking home my copy-book for the admiration of my father, I was surprised to see that he did not examine it with pleasure, which was a great disappointment, for it was clean ; only one blot upon the page, and, as it appeared to me, fairly written. It was not the writing, but the copy, which troubled him. Good Mr. Kirkham had perhaps a disputation with some perverse neighbor, on a Sunday night, before he came up from Newington, and had eased his mind by giving me as a copy a text from Proverbs xix, 29, slightly altered :

"Judgments are prepared for scorners, and stripes for the backs of *Universalists*."

My father had that proper sense of justice which revolts at a misquotation of the Bible, and of the endeavor in a public school to cast reproach upon those of different religious opinions. For while it is impossible, and not necessary in a common school, to teach the specific beliefs of all Christians, it is yet possible and advisable so to instruct our children that they may have a general knowledge of God our Maker and Christ our Saviour. Without it, our common schools are verily "godless schools," and we are subject to the reproach which is sometimes cast upon us. Our courts of law are opened with prayer, and so are our legislative assemblies, and without being considered an infringement upon personal rights. The children surely can bear a reminder of their duties, and are not likely to be made worse by it.

On Saturdays we were examined in the "New England Primer," and questioned on our knowledge of the "Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Divines." I do not know that it did us any harm, though I cannot now measure the exact amount of good. Dr. Humphries, in his preface to one edition of the Primer, says of the objection "that the doctrines are above the comprehension of children at the tender age when it is used to be committed and recited," proceeds upon the assumption that it is no advantage to learn anything earlier than it can be fully understood; about which there are doubtless various opinions. We were also required to learn some verses of a moral or religious thought, and to copy them into our writing-books. And I recall especially that glorious nineteenth psalm of David, which for years could be repeated, which will do one no harm, but will be good to remember.

There were one or two negro boys who attended school, and sat apart from the other scholars, in the south east corner of the house.

It was especially enjoined upon us to "show our manners" when we met people in the road, especially those who were riding. So, if a number of us were gathered together, we were arranged by its side, to salute by bow or curtesy those who were passing. Some years since I saw the same custom in passing a school-house where the children were at play, at noon, in England, between Penzance and the Land's End. It has lasted longer in the land of its birth than in the land of its adoption.

An old English spelling-book once fell into my hands, in which was this inscription:

> "Steal not this book for fear of shame,
> For here you see the owner's name."

This couplet was doubtless brought over by the early colonists, and we of the First North School District felt bound to make frequent record of the same. Whatever necessity there may have been for this timely caution may have arisen from the scarcity of books and the difficulty of procuring them. But with us there were no such reasons, for they were plenty and cheap. Noah Webster's spelling-book could be purchased for a shilling; for a Connecticut shilling, remember. It was the following of an ancient custom which often lasts longer than the occasion for it exists. The spelling of this warning was often different from the above, and capital letters were distributed indiscriminately through it.

The books used were the Columbian Orator, the American Preceptor, and the "Introduction," as it was called, for reading books. Occasionally the scholars would read in the Bible, one verse at a time, one jumping up as the other sat down, the sense and benefit of the reading being wholly destroyed by the blundering and hesitancy over the hard words. To some it was an easy task, and as readily performed as by advanced scholars at the present day; but by others, what hagglings, and twistings,

and shifting of position, from one foot to another, and slow spelling of words before they were pronounced! Daboll's arithmetic was in general use, with its computations in pounds, shillings, and pence, as well as in dollars and cents. A very common saying of the boys was—

"Addition is vexation, Subtraction is as bad,
The Rule of Three does puzzle me
And Practice makes me mad."

The discipline of the school was not what would be called mild and paternal. Punishments were often and severe, for trivial offenses, and for no offenses at all, as you know, Mr. Burr. The ferule lay handy upon the master's desk; if it was never broken, it was because it was of hard wood and did not become decrepit from age. An apple-tree switch was also a favorite instrument, and a good deal of service could be got out of it, if it was green and supple. I never saw or heard of rattan or a raw-hide being used here; but afterwards in the Center School, or "Stone Jug," in Dorr Street,—well, well,—there are some unruly boys, and some cruel, very cruel men. Nothing can be said in vindication of such treatment, except that it was the custom. One day Mr. Kirkham sent me out to gather some apple sprouts, for his own use; an orchard on the west afforded a good supply. But before they were delivered into his hands a thoughtful consideration of the matter led to their being half cut through, and thus very effectually weakened. I did not know whose back they were intended to fit. Upon the whole, however, I escaped very mildly, because of my belief in obeying rules, and only whispering, or laughing, or using pins upon my neighbor, when it could not be helped.

There was one form of punishment which injured the feelings more than it did the body, and that was seating the offending boy among the girls. Why this should have been so seriously taken to heart is not clear;

the boy survives it, and desires to repeat it in his manhood; so something of good comes from early instruction in the common school, besides a knowledge of the Westminster Catechism.

The school committee were saving of the money of the district, and so the boys in turn for a week or for a few days were required to open the house, sweep it out, make the fire, and put it in order for the day. As this took some time, they were obliged to leave home early in the morning, and the task was not a small one if they lived at a distance and the weather was cold and stormy. If none of the carefully covered coals of the previous day were alive, it was necessary to "borrow" some from Captain Cook, who taught me it was better to put the coals *upon* the wood, rather than *under* it.

If, as sometimes happens, this was not dry, and was of poor quality, there was still more difficulty in starting the fire; and then there was necessary foraging in the woodhouse of Nathan Wadsworth or Captain Cook for kindling materials, which were readily furnished. The wood question must have caused considerable debate in the school meetings, for there are many votes about it, both specifying that it shall be hard wood and that the master shall measure and inspect it. Early in the century ten feet was required from each scholar; afterwards eleven feet, and then twelve, to be brought when the scholars began. It is evident that this method was not satisfactory, and the contract system was tried. Return S. Mather agreed, in October, 1817, to furnish eight cords, of two feet in length, at $2.50 per cord, "being the loest bidder;" next year "sixteen shillings" were paid. In 1829 eleven feet were required from each scholar, "to be seasoned, and to be hard wood or green walnut or white ash in Lue thereof, or forty cents in Money;" and "that Each Scholer deliver his wood or Money when they Commence the school." Originally the wood was required to be three feet in length, and prob-

ably there was a chimney with a fire-place large enough to receive it. But it is evident that a spirit of inquiry was abroad, and that new methods of heating were being discussed, for in 1813 the committee were directed to "Enquire & Report to an adjourned Meeting the Expense of a Stove & chimney as proposed by them at the meeting." This was on the 21st of October. It was a momentous question, and must be grappled with at once; the district rose to the occasion, and on the 25th passed the following votes:

"*Voted*, That there be a Chimney built to Receive the Stove pipe.

"*Voted*, That there be a francklin Stove and pipe erected in the sd School Hous this Ensuing fall.

"*Voted*, That the School Committee Buy a Stove and pipe and have it Erected the Ensuing fall."

Very likely the stove was soon erected after this positive order, though there is no record concerning it on the treasurer's book until January 16, 1815, when there is an entry "Pade Ward & Bartholomew for a stove, $36.42." This was, doubtless, the "francklin Stove" which was there ten years later, when I learned how to build a fire. This stove — the "francklin" — did good service, until 1832, when it was

"*Voted*, that the Committee Exchange the now preasent stove at the School House & get a Box Stove that is Sutable for a School House."

I must confess to quite an affection for this old stove, and to a historical interest in the minute directions concerning it. In 1833 there was received "from E. Marsh 2.87 for the old stove."

Previous to this time desks were placed against the side of the house, and the scholars sat upon long benches facing the wall. But at an adjourned meeting, October 7, 1824, it was

"*Voted*, That the sd school-house be made into Slips."

And then there were desks on the east and west sides, with a passageway of a few feet in the middle of the room, at the north end of which was the desk of the master, and at the south the door of entrance. Here and there, where room could be found, were short and low benches for the small scholars; the "francklin stove" was in the middle.

The building stood in the highway, but abutted upon "the front of Isaac Prat's lot"; the exact location was at the junction of Elmer Street with Windsor road, though the present street line has been advanced to the east from the former one. The dimensions have already been given, thirty feet in length, twenty-two in width, and nine feet in height. Not a very large school-house for so extensive a district, and for the large number of children that were in it. There is nothing in the records which indicates the number in attendance, but the house was full, crowded beyond anything which would be allowed at present. There must have been sixty at least, of boys and girls, in about equal proportion. Mr. John E. Marsh, who was a pupil some years later, thinks he has seen as many as seventy-five there. About five feet of the south end was partitioned from the school-room, and was used for hanging caps, coats, shawls, etc., and occasionally for storing wood; this latter, however, often lay outside, to be a torment to the boy who started the fire in the morning. Deduct the entrance hall of five feet, together with the thickness of the walls and the partition and furring and plastering, and we shall have a room of about twenty-three by twenty feet. Now let any of the boys in the Brown School, who are enjoying a paradise under Mr. Barrows, calculate the number of cubic feet in the room, and see how little air space each scholar had. The room was kept extremely hot; day after day I went home with a headache, and, though a little fellow, thought to myself, "Shall I always have these headaches, if I grow up to be a man?" No one seemed to suspect that it was the viti-

ated air which produced it; fortunately we had a recess, and this helped us wonderfully.

In the summer the condition was much better; there were fewer scholars, perhaps thirty or forty, and the windows were frequently open. A woman was the teacher, and the term lasted for five months; the big boys were at home, so there were no rough sports, and we enjoyed a quiet, comfortable, profitable school. Miss Abigail A. Goodwin was the teacher in 1824, and my recollections of her are very pleasant; she died only a short time tince. At the close of the season there was something attempted in the way of examinations and speaking, very much after the manner of our public High School, but not quite reaching its standard. There was selected for me an extract from Home's tragedy of *Douglass*, commencing, "My name is Norval." It is doubtful if the performance had the full force and spirit of the original. The district was not rich, and so paid Miss Goodwin only thirty-three dollars and thirty-three cents for her services.

I never knew or heard of any of those personal contests between the teacher and the larger boys, of which we sometimes hear an account. There were doubtless difficulties occasionally at the school meetings, though of this there is no positive record, except that the votes of a previous meeting are rescinded without a seeming reason to us. Perfect harmony does not prevail in our day, and we can probably show as much obstinacy and self-will as did any of our ancestors. The noisy and quarrelsome time of a school meeting is proverbial. When Charles Wells was in Washington and visited the House of Representatives, he is reported to have said, that "he thought he was in a meeting of the South School District."

I find that generally, the expenses were paid by the public money, and by taxes laid by the district; but it is not a good indication that there are a few instances in which the school was only "kept as long as the public money shall last."

The taxes of some persons, which were small in amount, were frequently abated. In October, 1812, it was

"*Voted*, that Cuff negro tax of 48-100 be abated in the hands of Samuel Beckwith to collect."

There is a record of a curious matter which occurred at a "School Meeting Legally Warned and held by the Inhabitants, at the School House." The two votes have but a few words, but they are suggestive.

"*Voted*, That the School Master read a paragraph before this meeting.

"*Voted*, That the Master be dismissed from keeping a School in this district."

If it is said that there has been unnecessary minuteness of description and personal history in this account of the district and its school, it may be replied that it is well to contrast the conditions of to-day with those of sixty-five years ago. Though this school was on the outskirts of the town, yet the inhabitants were in many respects as primitive as those of the country. Money was not plenty, and neither for themselves nor their children could it be spent extravagantly. What little they obtained made them careful in its expenditure, and perhaps gave them as much happiness as its abundance now gives to us. The men and women were to be judged by the time in which they lived, not by any standards or comparisons of our own. If we know much more of many things, they knew quite as much of a lesser number, and were most of them as well or better satisfied with their condition in life. Without doubt there was a greater respect for honest labor and industrious habits than unfortunately now obtains. The newer is not always the better.

As a part of the history of this district it may be stated that the General Assembly in 1833 created out of it the Arsenal School district, described as "lying south of the south line of Josiah Capen, jr., and Henry

Capen's house lot, extending said line east to Connecticut River, and west to the west line of the present district." The old school-house was thus left very near the southern boundary of the district, which was not at all in accordance with the traditional idea which would locate the school-house in the geographical center, without reference to the convenience of the many. And hence in many towns we may now see a school-house, in an unsettled region in the highway, or perhaps in a patch of woods, solitary and alone, desolate in appearance, often battered and neglected, with not a single habitation near it. But then it is in the center of the district; the knotty question is discussed again and again, whenever and wherever a new school-house is to be built.

So it was to be expected that the First North School district would seek another location, which was very proper here, and on the 26th of March, 1834, it was

"*Voted*, That Return S. Mather, George Cook, Joseph Pratt, be a Committee to assart what the present School Housh in sd District will sell for, & what a New one Can be Built for, & what a spot of Ground in or near the Center of sd District will Caust & Mak thre report to the Nex meeting."

A new location was found up in Middlesex, and soon the old brick school-house was torn down. If after laboring for a third of a century it had accomplished no more in education than is shown by the above resolution, it was time to depart to other fields, in sorrow perhaps, in indignation certainly.

It must be admitted that the writing of the clerks of this district was very poor, and that the spelling was exceedingly incorrect. It was perhaps a fair specimen of the education of a majority of the men at that time, and of all the time since the settlement of the colony. Whoever examines the writing and spelling of many old records, the account books which now occasionally fall into our hands, or the bills against debtors with their

items, will see how imperfectly the common man was educated. He could speak better than he could write, and could transact his ordinary business understandingly and with facility; when it came to putting his words upon paper, he too often failed in doing it in a scholarly manner. The few months of schooling which he had received in winter were not enough for that correctness which comes from study and constant practice. The early records of the Arsenal district show no improvement of the records of the First North. The children of our later days, doubtless, both write and spell words better, but it is to be feared that many of them will be found to fail in those very essential parts of a common school education. If the habit is not acquired early in life, very likely it will not be acquired at all. An opportunity for examining specimens of writing from nearly all of the States in our Union, shows how curiously words can be misspelled, even by men whose penmanship is satisfactory.

Some of our old records are wonderfully correct; the ink retains its blackness — much better it is thought than some of our own will a hundred years hence. These clerks were generally educated men, scholars, learned in business, and proficient in writing. When such a man was found, he was retained in his office, because he was useful to the State, to the town, or the church, and too valuable an officer to be sacrificed as a victim to political reward.

Talking this matter over with Judge J. H. White the other day, he spoke particularly of the neatness and correctness of the records as kept by some of our ancient clerks, and handed me the following memorandum concerning John Allyn, who held various offices acceptably for a long time.*

* *Capt. John Allyn* was one of the most useful men in the Colony. He was town clerk of Hartford 1659–1696, Magistrate 1662, Secretary of the Colony 1663–1665, again from 1667 to 1695, Custodian of the Charter with Saml. Wyllis and

The result of all this discussion would seem to be, that our children should be more thoroughly instructed in the prime elements of education, so that in their future lives, whether they become professional men or farmers, or mechanics, they should be as well learned as time and application and capability will make them.

It is necessary to add but little more. Society, which which had been in a transition state for some years, was beginning to settle down in its new forms. The limitations of business, and the constrained habits of economy, were giving way to more extended intercourse with the world, and a greater diffusion of money. While it was difficult to give up old and familiar customs, and habits of thought, yet these were gradually disappearing under more general education, under that happy foresight which enables some men to discover that which is good in that which is new; and, perhaps, more than in all, in the coming in of a new generation, with fresh ideas and impulses, untrameled with too severe recollections of the past. If in all this there is not as much of the austerity, or outward demonstration of religion, there is probably quite as much of true happiness and consciousness of our duty to our fellow men and to our God.

In our increasing wealth lies a very great danger. Forgetting our responsibilities, we are liable to the temptation of thinking only of ourselves, and so neglect those

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John Talcott, and the universal scribe or recording officer of his time, not only keeping the records of the colonial courts and of the town but deputized to keep the records of an adjoining town until some competent person could be found to attend to that business. His writing was very compact and somewhat cramped in style, but always legible. In making up the records of the judgments of the courts, especially in criminal cases, he sometimes indulged himself in a bit of grim humor, as when a culprit had been committed to gaol, and also condemned to a whipping, Capt. Allyn entered up the court record thus: "that the said A. B. stand committed to the common gaol during the court's pleasure, and that he be entertained with the accustomed welcome which in such cases are given, and that the marshal and one of the constables are to see that it be severely given forthwith."

He was buried in the center burying ground, and his epitaph, Here lies interred the body of Honorable Lieut. Col. John Allyn, who served his Generation in the capacity of Magistrate, Secretary of Colony of Conn., 34 years, who dyed Nov. 6. 1696.

habits of labor and economy which have honored those gone before us. If there ever was a nation in this world whose conceptions of the dignity of industry and true economy should be of the highest character, that nation is ours.

This chapter cannot better be closed than by quoting from a discourse of the Rev. Dr. Horace Bushnell on the "Age of Homespun," delivered before the Litchfield County Agricultural Society in 1851:

"On thing at least I hope, that in these illustrations I have made some impression on you all of the dignity of work. How magnificent an honor it is, for the times gone by, that when so many schemes are on foot, as now, to raise the weak; when the friends of the dejected classes of the world are proposing even to reorganize society itself for their benefit, trying to humanize punishments, to kindle hope in disability, and nurse depravity into a condition of comfort, — a distinction how magnificent! — that our fathers and mothers of the century past had, in truth, no dejected classes, no disability, only here and there a drone of idleness, or a sporadic case of vice and poverty; excelling in the picture of social comfort and well-being actually realized the most romantic visions of our new seers. . . . Your condition will hereafter be softened and your comforts multiplied. Let your culture be as much advanced. But let no delicate spirit that despises work grow up in your sons and daughters. . . . Fear God and keep His commandments, as your godly fathers and mothers did before you, and found, as we have seen, to be the beginning of wisdom."

VII.

THE NORTH MEADOW.

THE *Hartford North Meadow* has always been noted as being valuable for tillage and pasturage; the owners are many, and the parcels of land are generally small. The farmers on the uplands are anxious to hold them, as they are kept fertile by the annual overflow from the river and are easily cultivated. The fences are few, and the whole tract is quite level, and comprises about one thousand acres. The river bank is being gradually washed away on the north, towards Windsor, but land is added lower down, and an island is forming on the east side of the river just above the Great bridge. The bank was, within the memory of many, near the middle of the river, where the encroachment is the greatest, and yet here great logs may be discovered in the bank at low water mark, at least ten or fifteen feet below the land above them, drifted there a long time ago, showing that the river at one time ran much farther west than at present. Most of the sand used in masonry in the city is brought from the drift just above the New England railroad bridge. Formerly the masons used mostly the yellowish sand, found at the different places in the Neck, but the brick-makers used generally, I think, that which was found near their kilns, of a lighter color and purer silex. The brick and mortar of a hundred years since were not at all inferior to the present manufacture. If one attempts to drive a nail in the mortar of our old buildings, he meets with much more resistance than in most of our modern ones. Possibly the composition of the mortar itself was different, for the walls laid in it were not easily thrown

down, and the bricks held together in great masses as they were tumbled from their beds. It was no easy matter to overthrow the old Jonathan Law house, nor the building south of James B. Hosmer, nearly opposite. So thoroughly were the bricks bedded, and so excellent was the composition of the mortar, that they did not become clean as soon as they reached the ground.

After the crops in the Meadow are gathered, it is "opened" for common use by the proprietors, for pasturage, for "Neat or Horned cattle" only.* A meeting is called to set a day of "opening," usually about the twentieth of October. A committee is appointed to examine the amount of feed upon the land of each owner, and to fix upon the number of "rights" to be allowed him; but every one, however small a piece of land he may own, is entitled to one right. The number of cattle each one can "put in" is governed by the number of rights he possesses, and these rights by the number of acres belonging to him. They must all be marked with the initials of the owner's name two inches in length, which is generally done by snipping the hair of each animal. The value of the rights is one dollar each, and these may be purchased, but then the cattle are to be marked with the letters of the owners of the land, thus showing that these only are in enjoyment of rights belonging to them.

At these meetings also a committee is appointed to "drive the meadow," that is, to visit it several times in the season to see that no cattle are there save those properly belonging to the proprietors. If any are found, they may be "pounded." The committee receive a moderate com-

*Although "neat and horned cattle" only are now admitted to the meadow, yet this regulation probably did not always exist, for in October, 1795, it was "*voted* that no horse or horse kind Jack Ass or Mule be allowed to Run at Large in sd Meadow from this time forward until the proprietors Agree Otherwise," etc. This was repeated the next year, when it was "*voted* that all horses, horse kind &c., shall be branded with the two first letters," etc. But in 1803 it was "*voted* that no horse kine be turned into sd Meadow the present Year," and this restriction continued thereafter, with the exception of colts under a certain number of months of age.

pensation, either in money or by the gift of an additional right. The time of "closing the meadow" is about the first of December. The crops are supposed to be all removed before the "opening"; if they are not the possible loss falls upon the owner. A proper consideration in a short delay is sometimes given to any one who from sickness or misfortune has not been able to gather them into his barns; but generally, the day having been known long before, no trouble is experienced. A few slow moving men, procrastinators, are sometimes caught.

The proprietors hold two meetings annually, one in March, and one in October, at which officers are chosen and committees appointed. The secretary posts a call for the meeting, together with the names of the owners of "rights," near the entrance to the meadow, so that the correctness of the list may be established when they come together. The proceedings are supposed to be quiet and harmonious, but I understand will sometimes rival those of a district school meeting. The privileges are valuable, and each owner naturally desires to secure all that belongs to him — of course no more.

The expenses are not large, but the roadways must be kept in passable order, and fences secured at the upper and lower end, that is, at the Windsor line on the north and at the track of the New England Railroad on the south. Formerly the lower bounds were near the meadow bridge, but after the Providence & Fishkill railroad was built, its northern line was regarded as the southern boundary of the meadow. The high elevation of the tracks was supposed to be as effectual a barrier against trespassing as a fence. The former limits of the meadow were narrowed somewhat when the railroad to Springfield was built. The east line of the railroad is now the west line of the meadow, so that a portion of the land, extending from the railroad to the fences on the west, has been cut off, and does not

come into common use. This was arranged for, I understand, by some compensation when the change was made. The committee, as has been said, establish the number of rights to which each proprietor is entitled. If his field has been cultivated to corn or potatoes, the value is much less than it would be if in grass; and if there is a good crop of rowen on the ground, the owner is considered in the increased rights allowed him. The feed is valuable, and brings the cattle into winter in good condition. All this matter is probably not fully understood by a great majority of our citizens, but it is governed by legal enactments, existing from an early period.

It is a beautiful sight, when driving through the meadow on a fine day in October, to see the hundreds of animals leisurely feeding, or quietly ruminating in the shade of a large elm or maple. It is certainly so in one of those glorious times of our Indian summer, when the air is warm and still, and a moderate haze is spread over the whole valley, partially concealing, but not blinding all objects. The picture is one of real enjoyment, to be appreciated by any who have the least particle of love for natural objects; its very quietness is comforting to a troubled spirit. Scarcely a sound is to be heard; the birds are mostly gone; a few crows, useful scavengers, are lazily flying about, and here and there, perched on the topmost limb of a tree, may be seen some of our hawks, watching for the mice or other like game. Occasionally a blue jay, garrulous fellow that he is, utters his hoarse scream, as if complaining that the farmer had carried away his corn. If you are near the "Hollow," you may hear the rattle of the king-fisher, as he darts into its waters for his finny food. It may be that you will hear the discharge of a gun, which starts all the birds around, and excites the anger of the owners of the cattle, for fear of their being wounded.

Though this land can hardly be considered as "lying in the Neck," yet it is so near to it, and mostly belongs to the dwellers therein, that it would not be proper to overlook it in this paper. A comprehensive history of our meadows, north and south, would be a worthy subject for some one who has the knowledge and patience of research.

The *Slaughter House*, which stood at the end of Slaughter House Lane, formerly called Soldiers' Field Lane, ought not to be overlooked. This might be called a continuation of Front Street north, passing on the east of the brick house formerly occupied by Jerry Cook. It is now mostly covered by railroad tracks, but the ancient road kept on the edge of the high ground, just out of the swamp, and terminated, when I was a boy, at the slaughter house. From this building to the land north of it, where George M. Way had a house and barns, there was a low stretch of land, like the break in a levee, which permitted the floods of the river to pour through, and extend farther to the west, on the lot of John H. Lord. I suppose that the early settlers went up this lane, which was not always covered by the floods, and having come to the break in the high land, turned westward, going near the foot of Russell Street, and then west and north through or near the woods afterwards called Morgan's, and still afterwards Patten's, and then came out on still higher ground just south of the old alms-house, opposite the North Cemetery. This is the route which any one would naturally take.

As to the slaughter house, I cannot learn much about it. It was probably erected many years before 1825, for formerly there was quite a large export from Hartford of beef and pork. Droves of cattle and swine came in from the surrounding country. Quite a business was done there within my own recollection, and a very extensive one many years before, I judge, from an

examination of the account books of some of our old merchants.

For many years this region was famous for its hen and turkey "shoots," in Thanksgiving week. The poor birds were put up at certain distances, and were the targets for experienced and inexperienced gunners, at a sixpence or a shilling per shot, to be the price of the one who killed or succeeded in so disabling it that it could not stand. It was sometimes thought that they were killed several times before they became the property of the successful competitor. A Humane society had not then objected to this sport, nor had it become a custom, as lately, to raffle for these birds in a saloon. It is quite possible that the whisky there found is more destructive than the powder and lead used at Slaughter House Lane; the latter was not "warranted to kill at forty rods," and it is easy to see how the whisky came to have this special recommendation. Great is the Saloon, and powerful is its whisky.

A history of the Meadow would not be complete without a notice of "Skinner's Hollow." This lies in a ravine about twenty rods west of the river, and a dozen rods north of the New England road. It may be thirty rods in length, and six or eight in breadth. It is overflowed by the annual freshets, and as the water subsides, quite a variety of fish are retained in it; even a few alewives are sometimes caught when a net is drawn in summer. A few springs in the west bank give a partial supply of fresh water, so that a small stream is usually running out of it. It is continued into the large sheet of water between the "Island" and the meadow road, and empties into the river near the ice-houses. A dam erected by the ice cutters is a barrier to its easy discharge, and creates a large pond which furnishes a bountiful supply of ice. Many years ago, before these operations were commenced, the strait between the main land and the Island was so narrow that we could jump across it at low water, when

we went farther up the shore, for the purpose of bathing. No boy at that time, however, would use this word; it was "going in swimming"; "bathing" was too tame to express the activity and hilarity of thirty or forty youngsters in the water.

A small bridge at the southern end of the Hollow enabled us to cross easily over to the river; the road was used by the farmers, and by those who drew sand from the river bank. But afterwards, when the water was caused to set back by the dam below, we were obliged to go north, around the pond, in order to get to the river. I have not examined the deeds of land lying around the Hollow, but the prefix of Skinner came undoubtedly from some former owner. It was quite well stocked with our common fish, pickerel, perch, roach, etc., and afforded good sport with the hook. But after haying, when there was time for a "fish fry," and the Cooks, and Tim Sheldon, and some others, had drawn their nets, there was but little satisfaction left for the angler.

It was formerly a very pretty little piece of water, lined on both sides by large trees, and was so quiet and still that a contemplative man could spend an hour in gazing upon its beauties. If a change was desired he could stroll over to the river, and seated upon a log drifted on the sand, enjoy the fine breeze which came up from the south, cool and refreshing even on a hot afternoon in summer. Looking east, a long stretch of the East Hartford Meadow was before him. Turning south, the most conspicuous object was the "Great Bridge," little dreaming of the elephant it was to become in after years; the rumble of wheels in crossing it was greater than the gentle murmur which came up from the city. Not a noise was heard as loud as the splash of the sturgeon as he fell back into the waters from which he so joyfully leaped. Taking advantage of the wind, the white sails of heavily loaded scows, or "Windsor brigs," as they were frequently called, might be seen, slowly moving up the river. If

not as rapid or graceful as our modern yacht, they were probably more profitable to their owners, and well fitted for transportation of goods. A lull in the wind would cause the two or three men aboard of them to spring to their poles, and so, slowly and laboriously pushing along, they broke the general silence by an occasional song, or musical cries, which seem to be general the world over in such labor.

There was a small pond on the southeast, a few feet from the large one, but holding no communication with it. This was surrounded by trees so thickly, that its waters appeared to be almost black; no fish were found in it, except a few small bullheads. It was a gloomy spot, in decided contrast with the greater sheet near it, especially on a sunny day, when the bright rays streamed through the open branches of the maples, ashes, and oaks; the surface then was almost like silvered glass. This was quite true on a sunny afternoon in August, when there was nothing to be heard but the chirping of numerous insects, or the occasional voices of men at work in the meadow; the gentleness of nature itself was spread all around. The myriads of mosquitoes sometimes to be found here were kept at bay by the fresh breezes from the south; but if one went to the lower and wooded ground on the west, he would see them in clouds, rising and falling in gentle undulations, with a humming noise like that of a swarm of bees. In November, or before the closing of the river, the wild ducks, on their way to the south, would occasionally stop in the Hollow to feed, much to the interest of the skillful gunner.

When it was visited a few weeks since, it was found in a very different condition; many of the trees had been cut, so that now it was quite open to the sun and air, and the extent of water was limited. The small pond now communicated with the large one, for muskrats had so mined the narrow barrier that it was nearly thrown down. The carcass of an unburied horse, partly devoured by

dogs and crows, added nothing to the beauty or pleasantness of the surroundings. The odor was quite unlike that which comes from the semi-resinous buds of the river poplar or the young leaves of the neighboring willows.

This was the neighborhood of the famous "fish fry." The day previous, nets had been drawn in the river and in the Hollow; the fish nicely dressed, were kept for the appointed feast. A lot of "jolly good fellows" had been notified and were promptly on hand. The Cooks, and Sheldons, and Goodwins, and other proper inhabitants of the Neck were there; and others also, farther south, dwellers in the city, as Robert Turner, Nat Bunce, J. G. Eggleston, Jo. Harris, Benjamin Bolles, Hugh Waterman, Joseph Pratt, Gen. Hayden, Charles Olcott, Joseph Bradley, Charles Fowler, as full of fun as an egg is of meat, Harry Burr, and many others, occasional, if not constant visitors. No one enjoyed these festive occasions better than Benning Mann, who once set fire to a hay cock, by whose side Sam Shipman was quietly resting. If Capt. Aaron Cook could be persuaded to sing the "cow song," the merriment was complete and the revelry at its highest. One verse is given as a specimen, all joining in the chorus. It was evidently not the poetical construction or arrangement which put them in such good spirits.

"There was an old man,
Who had but one cow,
And how to keep her
He didn't know how;
So he built him a barn,
To keep his cow warm.
Harm! boys, harm!
A little more liquor,
Will do us no harm!"

It must not be judged that these occasions were times of drunkenness, for they were not; the men truly were not total abstainers, but they meant to be temperate. A drunkard was despised by all of them. Athletic sports

were indulged in by the younger and more active, such as running, jumping, and wrestling, while the elders sat quietly by as became them, drinking their punch, enjoying the fine afternoon, telling their stories, often repeated, perhaps, as is the custom with these ancients. The fish, with slices of salt pork as large as one's hand, were fried in that venerable, long-handled pan, which has honored almost numberless such occasions. The potatoes and onions were a savory mess, and the cucumbers cut into ice-cold water, were warranted never to hurt anyone. The punch was a compound upon which some of the guests prided themselves; practice had made them perfect. No water was allowed in its composition, save that which came from the melted ice; considering that the only other fluid was rum, we can realize which was the greater factor; those who partook of it could do the same also. This was not a funeral occasion, but an unbending for once in a year; it was probably as quiet, and orderly, and temperately conducted, as many other feasts which are now celebrated under a roof, with brilliant gas-lights, popping of corks, singing of songs, and merry speeches.

Some years ago, twelve acres of land, including the Hollow, belonged to the estate of Richard Goodman. Nathaniel Goodwin and Henry Keney were appointed as appraisers. "You being the youngest man," said Mr. G. to his colleague, "please state your opinion of its value." "Ninety dollars per acre," said Mr. K. with the promptness of a business man who knows what he is about. "No, no sir, too much, too much." Recovering from his astonishment, he added, "Will you please tell me, Mr. Keney, the reasons for your opinion." "Yes, I will give that myself." "Oh! oh! I think we will go, Mr. Keney, I think we will go;" and the appraisement stood. Mr. Goodwin was well acquainted with the meadow, had surveyed and appraised many of the lots, and been engaged in the settlement of many of the estates of the dwellers in the Neck. If all that he did in the line of his business for

the last forty years of his life could be recorded, with his quaint sayings and sly humor, it would be a valuable addition to our local history, and a strong testimony to the exceedingly good nature and integrity of this uncommon man. He probably never attended a "fish fry," for there he would have been out of his element; his brother James willingly supplied his place on such occasions.

Probably no two men had gone over the land in the north part of the town so frequently and minutely as Capt. Aaron Cook and Nathaniel Goodwin. The division of estates required their frequent services, and any one who rummages among old family papers and maps in the surveyor's office, will be astonished at the extent of their labors. The maps of the town by Capt. Cook, with names of roads and streets, and lines of lots with the owners' names, are particularly valuable. The present preservation of them may be safe, but a publication of them would insure against a possible destruction. The same may be said of our Town Records, whose loss would be a very serious matter. So much is contained in them with reference to our early history, that the volumes would be interesting to read, and valuable to be kept. If the records are destroyed or lost, their place would be quite imperfectly supplied by the extracts which from time to time have been published by individuals. The publication of our Colonial Records by order of the State, from the organization of the first Court in 1636 up to the time of the Revolution, is a fair example of what should be done by the town of Hartford; the sales would probably meet a large share of the expense. Mr. J. H. Trumbull and Mr. Charles J. Hoadly have done their work so well for the State, that they are deserving of the highest commendation. It is not a matter for an individual to undertake at his own expense and hazard, but is becoming to the dignity and authority of the town. An assurance of correctness and completeness would thus be given, which could be obtained in no other way.

Upon reference to page 11 of this paper, a statement of George Cook will be found concerning certain large stones found in the meadow, larger than common merestones, set in a direct line, as though they marked the boundary of some former road; and as published in the *Times* the suggestion was then made, that possibly these were established by the first settlers, which conjecture is doubtless incorrect. For upon reflection, we may consider that these men had something to do beside planting stones in an open and unsettled land; no new squatter on a western prairie wastes his precious time in such unnecessary labor, when the first aim is to obtain something upon which to live, so he travels here and there, as convenience suits him, until he is satisfied, or troubled with neighbors.

The true time of their establishment was in 1768, for at the May session of the General Assembly in that year a memorial was presented by "Samuel Wadsworth and others, proprietors of the North Meadow in the town of Hartford, showing to this assembly that the road or cartway from the north end of said meadow by the bridge, up north through said meadow about three miles, to Windsor line, etc., which cart-road having never been laid out and recorded so that its width is ascertained, and that it is necessary that said road be kept so wide as that teams can pass and repass each other, and that by encroachments said road is so narrowed that it is rendered almost useless; praying for a committee to go and view the circumstances of said cartway and meadow, to fix and ascertain the width of said road by meets and bounds, and make report of their doings thereon," etc. The assembly appointed "Thos. Hosmer, Esq., Messrs. John Whitman and Benjamin Colton," and directed them to "make return of their doings thereon."

At the October session of the General Assembly of the same year, this committee reported "that on the 10th day of instant October they viewed said road, heard all parties, and are of opinion that there is need

of said road's being widened and staked out as prayed for; and accordingly said committee began at Windsor line and laid out said highway or road two rods wide, running southerly about thirty-seven degrees west, and at the end of every forty rods erected bounds or monuments, and in the lane near the bridge, the way not being quite straight, they erected bounds every three or four chains till they came to said bridge in said meadow;" whereupon it was

"*Resolved by this Assembly*, That said road or cart-way, as laid out through said meadow by the committee aforesaid be, and the same is hereby ordered and established to be and remain a road or cart-way through said meadow forever, for the use of the proprietors of said meadow."

By this report of the committee, it will be noticed that the course of the road was direct from the Windsor line, nearly three miles in length, to the meadow bridge. Here there was a curve to the west, beginning near the present ice-house, and continuing to the bridge, as there is to this day. I find no other enactments concerning the lay-out of a road through the meadow, or the establishment of metes and bounds, except this, in an examination of the printed Colonial Records. The memorial specified that it had never been laid out or recorded, and hence the action of the General Assembly was prayed for and obtained. These "bounds or monuments at the end of every forty rods," differing from the usual mere-stones, are the ones, without doubt, which George Cook says are now occasionally met in plowing; all being in a straight line, which if prolonged towards the Windsor line would lead into the river; showing also that the course of the river has changed materially at the north end of the meadow.

Near the Windsor line there was always less of the swampy ground than farther south, and but little of the wood is now standing. East of this, toward the river bank, the ground is more elevated, and was found

quite dry this second day of April. The farmers were then carting manure on their fields, with perfect ease except through a slough near the meadow gate, and a terrible piece of road between the gate and the road to Windsor. It was only equaled by that stretch of public highway about thirty rods in length, between the bridge and the "Staddles," which is a disgrace to the civilization of the towns in which it lies, and will remain so until it is thoroughly underdrained. What has been done south of this can be done here, and it should be thoroughly done at once; it is folly to cart gravel upon such a soft clay bottom as exists here. It is no excuse that this nuisance lies upon the outskirts of Windsor and Hartford; every citizen has a right to complain that this great highway to the north remains, and has remained for many years, in its present condition. We might refer to the ordinance of the General Court in 1645, which directs "that the highwaye between the sayd Wyndsor and Hartford in the upland be well and passably amended and mayntayned for a continuance, by Hartford by so much as belongs to them, and by Wyndsor by as much as belongs to them;" and Hartford has nearly complied with this order, for on its part it has mostly stoned the road bed, so that its portion of the work is very comfortable for travelers.*

In the meadow, near the division line of the two towns, and not very distant from the river, there is to be found seven or eight very old apple trees; these are ungrafted, and all that is left of a former orchard, I understand. One of the largest measured eleven feet six inches in circumference at three feet from the ground; and this was but a shell of its former greatness, for it was much decayed, and one side of it was wholly gone. The ice, in large cakes, floating down the river

*Since this was written I understand that the town of Windsor has determined to thoroughly repair its portion of this highway.

in the high floods, had probably ground into the tree in former times, and so led to its permanent injury. Or possibly the farmers had hitched their horses to it, and these, for want of hay or oats, or from a vicious habit, had gnawed into its side, as we may see they have done all over our city. It is impossible for us to ascertain the age of these trees, but judging from the size of the trunks, and the ample tops, and the size of some trees of which we have knowledge, they are from one hundred to one hundred and fifty years old. There is no great bulging, or buttressing at the crown of the trees, and apparently there has been a deposit of earth around them, brought down by the floods in spring time. Mr. Marsh tells me that this orchard formerly extended to the river, and that some trees have been washed away within his remembrance. A large white maple (*Acer dasycarpum*), standing near, and much injured, measures fourteen feet three inches in circumference at three feet from the ground. In March, 1884, I measured an old apple tree standing in the highway to Windsor, west of these described trees, and near the residence of George L. Deming, which was twelve feet in circumference in the waist, at three and one-half feet from the ground. Heavy winds twisted and broke it in pieces, and it is now gone. It probably was as old as those in the meadow, and the great buttresses which supported it were all exposed to view, as they were out of reach of the silt of the river.

Although the proprietors of the Meadow were required to keep the bridges in order and the roads in repair, yet complaint was made by those owning land in the north part of it, that while they were taxed equally with others for these purposes, their own section was neglected, and that "they have no use or benefit by the way that leads in at the south end of said meadow, and runs north through the same, but have at their own cost been obliged to find and repair ways for themselves, ... praying to be

released from said taxes so long as they provide their own ways, etc." This memorial was presented to the General Assembly in 1756, signed by John Talcott, John Cook, Joseph Wadsworth, Wm. Wadsworth, John Spencer, Ann Dickinson, Ozias Pratt, Zebulon Goodwin, Wm. Goodwin, Daniel Marsh, Daniel Wadsworth, Joseph Wadsworth, Jr., and Moses Dickinson. Col. John Pitkin, Capt. Stephen Hosmer, and Capt. Daniel Webster were "appointed to inquire into the matters referred to, and to make report to the Assembly at New Haven in October next."

The committee reported favorably, and it was resolved "that the aforesaid report of said committee be, and is hereby, accepted, allowed, and approved; and the said memorialists and each of them are hereby also released and discharged from the aforesaid tax already granted by said proprietors, and shall be exempted from any future tax or rate that shall or may be by said proprietors granted by the proprietors aforesaid, so long as the memorialists shall at their own cost provide ways for themselves suitable for their need and situation."

This decision would seem to be perfectly just when we consider that the meadow was nearly three miles in length, and that the expenditures were made in the southern part, greatly to the inconvenience of the proprietors in the north. Perhaps this led to a better arrangement, and might do the same in many towns where outlying roads are sadly neglected.

The Swamp has often been referred to in this paper, and it is frequently mentioned in the records of the General Court, of the town, and in old deeds. It was so much lower than the meadow that it was unfit for cultivation, but was covered with a heavy growth of trees, principally of the black and swamp white oaks, white and red maples, some ash and elm, and an occasional hickory. Over fifty years ago I found nuts of the latter which fairly rivaled the famous nuts from Windsor or Glastonbury meadows; and once a patch of the high blackberry, whose fruit was

as large and luscious as any to be seen in our gardens. And here too I found four varieties of our wild grapes, very good of their kind, but not to be tolerated when better ones can be so easily procured. The old area of the swamp is now much diminished, and but comparatively little of the wood remains. Before many years this will be cut off, thus admitting the sun and air, and permitting a quicker drying of the land. When this is done, the winds which now have free course over the meadow, will sweep over the old swamp, and if better drainage is provided, will give us less swarms of mosquitoes, and improved chances for good health.

The Creek rises in the southwest part of the town of Windsor, and receives the drainage from a large area. It is crossed by the road which runs from the Blue Hills to the Windsor road, about four miles from the city, and running southeasterly crosses this last-mentioned road just above the third mile stone; turning south it passes through the swamp, and enters the Connecticut river near the pumping house of our water-works. Quite a body of water flows down it after a heavy rain, but during the summer the amount is small. There was a saw-mill on it, near the old red tavern within my remembrance, but the building has been destroyed, together with the dam, for many years past. There was pretty good fishing in this stream, above the meadow bridge, at one time, for small pickerel; but then more dead hogs, cats, and old horses were put under ground, rather than committed to the water. Neither was the region considered a free dumping ground for all sorts of rubbish and filth, which is sure to be found in a city, but which ought to be burned.

Since the south line of the common field is now the embankment of the New England Railroad, the way from the meadow bridge to said road has remained in a neglected condition. Whether the proprietors gave up their control of it is not clear; the town does

nothing toward its repair, and apparently the city does not. It is much cut up by the heavy teams, drawing sand from the bar near Skinner's Hollow, so that, we might say, if it belonged to the city, that the city was unmindful of its duty. It may be a matter of disputed ownership and care, resembling much the uncertain residence of an undesirable pauper, who is banged about from one town to another, with no one anxious to claim him as a lawful resident.

Towards the north of the meadow the road is not as much traveled. While it is "passable," yet it is not "convenient." The tread of the oxen and the wheels of the cart have worn deeply into the soil, leaving a ridge in the middle of the track, which is decidedly objectionable to one who is driving over it in the ordinary one-horse buggy. Though the road is for the proprietors only, yet the great comfort to travelers who are permitted to use it, would seem to indicate that what would not be granted as a right, might be yielded as a favor. Perhaps the proprietors had this in mind, when on March 1, 1872, it was

"*Voted*, That the proprietors have leave to take the balk* out of the middle of the road against their own land, or at any other point with consent of the committee."

In the latter part of August the *swallows* began to collect in great numbers before migrating to the south. Just before sundown they would settle among the

Balk. The word is an old one, and is still in common use, and, as will be seen, refers to a ridge of land left undisturbed by the plow. In none of the authorities which have been consulted do I find any reference to a ridge of grass-covered land in a road-way; yet it is just as applicable and proper as if it was an unplowed ridge in a field. Anyone will recognize this when he drives with a one-horse wagon through the northern part of the meadow. Continuous use by cattle with the ox cart have worn deeply two paths or ruts, in some places a foot, or even more, below the level of the adjacent land. In the middle of the track is a ridge of earth, grass covered, which is narrow, but as high as the meadow, not wide enough for the tread of the single horse. He is in doubt, and perplexed about his footing, and not unfrequently the wheels of the buggy on one side are so high above the others, by running upon the bank, that there is great danger of an overturn. And the reflections of a traveler are, that the town is very remiss in leaving a road in such a dangerous condition. We ought to be much obliged to them for permission to travel through this field, and enjoy its

willows on the Island,† the arrivals continuing until dark: the chattering for some hours was wonderful. After a while there was silence, as if the programme for the morrow had been discussed and agreed upon. If now a gun was fired they would rise up by thousands, and flying about for a while, would return to their resting place, and soon were quiet again. It was very interesting to watch them coming in troops to this gathering, from all quarters of the horizon, as if this was understood to be a general rendezvous for all swallowdom. In the morning they were off, flying about all over this region, gathering their food as usual in their graceful sweeps and curves in the air, and at night returned to the willows. This was repeated for a few days, and then they were gone, to be no more seen until another spring brought them back again; the suddenness of their departure was a surprise to all unacquainted with their habits.

Formerly, it was supposed that they buried themselves in the water and mud, at the bottom of ponds and rivers. It is astonishing what an amount of evidence can be obtained that they do hibernate in this

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beauties; it is their own, and we are trespassers except by their consent. When crowds flock to the meadow to play ball on a Sunday, or too many consider it a fair place for filling their bags with corn, or potatoes, or apples, why, the farmers still regard it as a trespass, but without any qualification or reservation.

Balk. A ridge of green sward left by the plough in ploughing, or by design between different occupancies in a common field. — *Halliwell.*

" In agriculture, are ridges or banks between two furrows or pieces of arable land. — *E. Chambers Cyclopedia, 1738.*

" A ridge generally; a dividing ridge; a bar. — *New English Dictionary, Murray.*

" A ridge; especially a ridge left unploughed in the body of a field, or between fields; an uncultivated strip of land, serving as a boundary, often between pieces of ground held by different tenants. The latter use originated in the open air system (common in English and Scotch). — *Century Dictionary.*

" A ridge in one's path, a stumbling-block, check. — *New English Dictionary.*

" A ridge of land left unploughed between furrows, or at the end of a field. A ridge between furrows. — *Webster.*

† Though called "the Island," yet it was not truly an island, though probably it had been one at some former period, when the river, or a part of it, had run through the land at the south of Skinner's Hollow.

manner. Sworn testimony can be found, that in great flocks they have been seen diving into the water, and that they have been dug out of the mud in midwinter, without any signs of life, but have returned to animation upon being brought into a warm room. The idea is a very old one, and most of the evidence in favor of this hibernation is quite ancient; but there is some testimony in its favor in the present century, and some even in our own country. A few years since I prepared a paper upon the "Hibernation of Swallows," and was surprised to find how generally it was believed that they spent the winter in the mud: a mass of evidence was brought together which was wonderful in its support. But it was not true; no such thing happens, and cannot happen to these delicate birds; it is a physical impossibility. All swallows held under water by the hand are drowned in a very few minutes, and there is no reason to suppose there would be a different result if they went under it of their own will. The whole difficulty was this, that the migration of these birds was not well known at the time, and the suddenness of their departure led to the belief that they must have gone to the bottom of the ponds and rivers, especially as they were seen flying low over them, and diving suddenly down to the water, were said to have disappeared. The thousand upon thousands which I saw years ago would fly in masses over and about the river, wheeling and turning, and in the dusk of evening were out of sight in a moment. Where were they? in the mud? no, in the willows, which hiding place was revealed by their chattering.

There are other birds which assemble in the meadow in the autumn time. At least fifty-five years ago I found quite a resting place of the crow-blackbirds among some young soft maples and willows. About sundown they began to assemble, and before dark they appeared a black, chattering mass among the trees; the limbs were broken

and the ground was covered with droppings and dead birds. A gun fired at a venture brought down several, and the whole flock rose a short distance above the trees, only to relight in the same place. In a small way it was a reminder of Audubon's description of a pigeon roost in Kentucky. An inquiring turn of mind led to the dressing and broiling of several; the flesh was dark colored, dry, and almost flavorless; there was nothing repulsive either in appearance or flavor, but one would prefer a woodcock or snipe very naturally.

These two last-mentioned birds were formerly very plenty in the meadow and swamp. The old hunters would tell wonderful stories of the number which they had easily obtained in a few hours; and inasmuch as these stories are not concerning fish, where a slight exaggeration is considered allowable, and as the hunter is always a man of a certain amount of veracity, why, his account is to be received with so much of truthfulness as belongs to the character which he has established. With this very clear and explicit statement no hunter can complain. When a very truthful man says that he killed one hundred woodcock in six mornings, years ago, when he was young, why, he must be believed; if he had said that he got a thousand of them, we might entertain a doubt.

The wild pigeons also were plenty here, stopping for a short time in the spring on their way to the north, and also in the autumn, in great numbers, upon their return. George Cook says that he has known of their nesting in the trees of the swamp.

When this land is overflowed by the spring freshets, great numbers of muskrats are driven from their haunts, and swimming about in the flood, fall victims to the numerous gunners, who kill them for their skins; nearly a hundred have been shot by a party in one day. The winter skins now bring from ten to fourteen cents, and the summer ones from twenty to twenty-two cents each;

this good luck is generally confined to the first day's work.

A half dozen of mink were killed this last winter by one young man. The skins now can be sold for about a dollar, but the fur is not as valuable as formerly, for they are not now fashionable. At one time, during the war, they brought fourteen or fifteen dollars. Some years since an otter was shot here, but none of late. A few woodchucks are found, and skunks also. Of snakes the common striped one is not uncommon; an occasional black one is seen. Among other animals are the usual field mice, and rats in considerable numbers.

Before the Holyoke dam was built, and the pounds at the mouth of the river were established, there were several noted fish places for shad on the banks or flats east of Skinner's Hollow. A hundred years since, I am informed, that they were caught by the cart load and were sold at two cents apiece. Within the remembrance of George Cook, great numbers were still caught, and sold when he was a boy at twelve cents apiece. I have had the pick of them for twenty-five cents. Wm. Drake had a "fish place" a half-mile north of here, and was quite successful. None have been caught since the river was boomed for logs, ten years or so ago, for the fish, fearing to pass under the boom in shallow water, kept in the deeper places, beyond the reach of the net. The fishermen were discouraged at the small hauls, and gave up their nets. These, and many other fish places on this river, now belong only to the past, due, as G. C. says, principally to the pounds at the mouth of the river. The selfishness of a few men has so shaped legislation that the people must suffer for their benefit. Whatever fine-spun theories may be allowed to prevail in favor of these obstructions, a common-sense view of the subject would seem to be, that the shad should be allowed to pass up the river at all times, and thus give an equal chance to all the fishermen upon its banks. Massachusetts would thus have no right

to complain of the selfishness of Connecticut, and would doubtless be more liberal and just to all, from the source of the river to the river's mouth.

This meadow, while owned by individuals and cultivated by them like other lands, was yet subject to common use at a stated period. It was fenced on the north and on the south by the proprietors, in proportion to the number of acres which they possessed, subject to a certain deduction in the length by the "difficulty of setting," or the danger of it being carried away by the floods. Every few years a committee was appointed to "New Moddle and Lay out the Common" fence. The list for the year 1818 commenced as follows:

"A distribution of the Common fence round the Common field Called the North Meadow in Hartford to Each proprietor his just proportion being 13½ Links to an Acre beginning at the great River at the North End of sd Meadow and running Westerly on the south Bank of the Drain Called Barbers Drain — as follows."

There is appended a list of the proprietors, one hundred and one in number, with the number of "links of chain" assessed to each one, 75, 400, 762, 1,448, 27, etc.

The following vote passed at a proprietors' meeting, October 2, 1820, shows the exactness with which the business was conducted, and is a fair specimen of the votes at the different annual meetings:

"*Voted* Said proprietors have Liberty to turn into sd Meadow no more than one Ox or neat kine to 2 Acres of Land they are then possessed of in sd Meadow that hath not been Inclosed by particular Inclosure the present Year, and that all Creatures turned into sd Meadow shall be marked or Branded with the two first Letters of the proprietors name in whose Right they are turned in upon in Capitals not Less than 2 Inches Long fairly and plainly made on the Near side of every such Creature before they are turned into sd Meadow, and Each proprietor Shall Lodge a Certificate with one of the haywards of sd Meadow Showing the Number of Acres of uninclosed Land he hath at that time in sd Meadow at or before the time he shall turn his Creatures into sd Meadow and if any Creature or Creatures shall be put into sd Meadow or found there running at Large Contrary to

the Intent and Meaning of the above Order Every such Creature Shall be Liable to be Impounded by the haywards of sd Meadow or by the owners of the Land whereon Such Creature Shall be found, and the owner or owners of Such Creatures so Impounded shall be Liable to pay fifty Cents poundage for Every such Creature, three Cents whereof Shall be for the turnkey."

"*Voted* that Creatures under the above regulation may run at Large in sd Meadow 45 days after sd Meadow is Opened and no longer."

In 1839, a vote was passed against turning into the meadow "any Unruly Creature or Creatures," with directions that such shall be impounded if found. Frequent votes are passed "that no one of the Committee have leave to expend on the road more than two dollars without the consent of the majority"; this was afterwards increased to five dollars.

The roads and bridges of this "Long Meadow or Common Field" were to be made and kept in order by the proprietors of the meadow, at their own expense; the town neither paid for them nor had control over them, so they were naturally jealous of their rights, and careful that no unwarranted or injurious use was made of them. I suppose that the general public had the privilege to pass and repass quietly through the meadow only by sufferance, if no damage was done; it is among the many beautiful drives about our city at certain seasons, and is much frequented by those who are pleased with the long stretches of level land, the cultivated fields, and bountiful crops. I have never known of any one on such an errand being complained of, unless he left the meadow gate open, which too many carelessly did.* A boy often earned a small sum by attending to the gate. The following vote, passed March 1, 1842, explains itself:

"*Voted* that no person or persons have right to draw through the field any Brick wood or stone or anything else that is not the growth

*In 1851 it was "*voted* that notice be put on the Gate posts that it be One Dollar fine for leaving either gate open during the time sd Meadow is open."

or production of the field without the leave of the Committee and any person who does not Conform to this Act may be prosecuted by any of the proprietors for the benefit of sd meadow."

So level a road and retired a place doubtless made this a favorite track for the horsemen. The sport may have become so common that it interfered with the farm work, or damaged the road, or brought together too many undesirable people for their comfort. At this same meeting there was passed the following:

"*Voted* that no person or persons be allowed to run or trot horses for the purpose of trying there speed within the limits of the Hartford North Meadow on penalty of two dollars fine one half to the complainer the other to the Treasury of sd field to be prosecuted by either proprietor."

To guard against any possible deception or trickery this vote was passed Oct. 1, 1842:

"*Voted*, That if any proprietor after the assizers have vewed his feed shall Mow rowen and carry it off or corn stalks or plow any grass land within one week after sd meadow is Opened unless stated at the time the assizers viewed it that such was intended to be done it shall be the duty of the assizers to alter the number of creatures which had been given in the Certifficate according to the quantity of fodder carried off as to them shall seem fit."

In 1875 this vote was amended by changing "one week to three weeks," and was so continued afterwards.

In 1794 there were ninety-five proprietors; in 1818 one hundred and one; and in 1844, seventy-nine.

Mr. Charles M. Andrews, in his account of "the River Towns of Connecticut, a study of Wethersfield, Hartford, and Windsor," published in the Johns Hopkins University studies 1888, has given a pretty accurate account of this common field, but has made a mistake, I think, when he says, "the cattle and cow rights, which were formerly so important, and were bought and sold, thus giving outsiders an entrance into the meadow, have been given up within twenty years." An

examination of the records of the proprietors' meetings since 1792 shows nothing of this kind. And Mr. Thomas Gates, the clerk, says that is not correct as applied to Hartford. Mr. George Smith of Wethersfield, says there has been no change from former custom there, and that "when sold, prices ranged from 25c to 50c the season, per head, to non-proprietors." Mr. H. S. Hayden of Windsor says "that the rights, which are worth from one dollar seventy-five to two dollars twenty-five cents each, according to the season, are still bought and sold; and that there has been no change in this respect within the last twenty years."

And I think Mr. Andrews has made a mistake when he says that "the practice of throwing open the meadow about the middle of November, *a date decided by the selectmen*," etc. For, as I understand the matter of this particular common field, and am informed by a number of proprietors, the selectmen of the town have nothing to do with it. It properly belongs to, and is subject to, the decision of the proprietors, as has been mentioned before; they vote upon the time of opening, and declare when it shall close. If also, as he says, this time of opening "was quite as often fixed in town meeting as in proprietors'," there is no record or intimation of it in the records of the meetings of the proprietors of the north meadow, since 1792. I cannot go farther back than this, for the book of records previous to this date is lost; at least Mr. Gates has it not in his possession, and has never seen it. Possibly the book may yet be recovered, as there is a rumor that it is still in existence.

There is but little remaining to be said about the Hartford North Meadow, or Common Field. I have not been able to discover the time of opening the road south of Timothy Mather, from the highway to Windsor leading into the meadow. Perhaps it is referred to in the following vote passed in town meeting December 25, 1701:

"That Capt. Nichols Ensign Tho: Bunce Mr. Joseph Bull

Sergt. Edward Cadwell be a committee or any three of them, to goe and view a conveniant or the most conveniant place for a highway, from the ox-pasture hill to the river, and make return of their doings thereon to the next town meeting."

There had been action previously directing this road to be opened, but it was reconsidered December 19, 1700, in consequence of disagreement or dissatisfaction in passing through the land of or exchange of land with Capt. Joseph Wadsworth, so the above vote of 1701 was passed.

Only one item more and I have done. In endeavoring to locate "Obadyah Spencer's now dwelling house," there was found in his will dated June 22, 1709, the following: "Item I give, grant, devise, and bequeath to Samuel Spencer my son all that Messuage," etc., and then he gives to Ebenezer, another son, "a lot of land in the long meadow in Hartford aforesaid, at a place called *Hobs Hole*,"* etc. Now, where was Hobbs' Hole? It had never been heard of previously by me, or recorded, to my knowledge, and it gave me as much anxiety as did the discovery

* Though discouraged at learning of this new appellation, at the very completion of this paper, yet having something of the curiosity of R. C. to learn more, I inquired some days after of Samuel Mather, if he could tell me anything about it. "Why yes," said he, "I hold deeds of several pieces of land, in which 'Hobs Hole' is mentioned. It is about as large as a small barn yard and is five or six feet deep, and water is always standing in it." His daughter was familiar with it, and had gathered strawberries near it, in summer, and grapes in autumn. "Why yes," said John E. Marsh, "it is down there by the Creek, near the pasture where you see the bright sun light." So on the 27th of May, on a fine afternoon, I went in search for "Hobs Hole," and found it. It is but a few feet from the Creek, and surrounded by trees; some are growing in it which may be fifty or sixty years old; a small stream of water was running from it about as large as a pipe-stem.

There was nothing to make it particularly noticeable at present. It was probably formed by the Creek, which had, in its windings in former years, left its ancient bed, and turning to the west, had made a large circuit; a high bank on the west and south had turned the waters eastward into its present course; these had formed an almost complete loop, wearing away the alluvial soil, and by their violence, after a sudden and severe storm perhaps, had made such an excavation that it was dignified by the name of Hole. But why "Hobs Hole"? This is a mystery which I cannot solve. "Skinner's Hollow" was so named, probably, from some ancient owner of land in its vicinity. Very likely a similar reason would account for this hole; perhaps some notable event in which Hobbs was engaged, occurred here; perhaps poor Hobbs was drowned here, possibly in attempting to cross the creek in high water; possibly a tree which he was cutting fell upon him, and tumbled him into the current; possibly he tumbled in of his own will. The speculations might be endless.

But whatever might have been the origin of the name, it was early in the history of the Colony, for, as had been seen, it was mentioned by Obadiah Spencer in his will

of the footprints in the sand near the sea shore, by Robinson Crusoe. There comes up for investigation, at the last moment, to disturb the peaceful completion of this paper, this annoying question, and I shall not venture upon it. Something must be left to those who come after us, as Mr. Samuel Tudor used to say, when complaint was made to him about the debt then existing for building Christ Church.

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in 1709, and had in all probability been well known many years previously, but no mention of Hobbs has otherwise been found.

As if to complicate matters further, there comes at the last moment, just as these proofs are being corrected, a note from John E. Marsh, in which he says, "in my boyhood days the Up Neck folks used to speak of a place as "*Bullerkin Hole*," (*Bullock in hole?*) This place was owned by Joseph Pratt in the Swamp near the west end of his meadow lot, nearly surrounded by trees, and in haying time was terribly hot. The place was just about as far south of the meadow road as Hobbs' Hole is north of it." It is very clear that the Hartford Long Meadow is not yet exhausted.

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